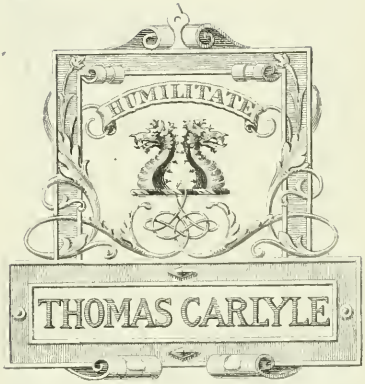
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THOMAS CARLYLE

ISAAC FOOT

# WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

LONDON:
ROBSON AND SONS, PRINTERS, PANCRAS ROAD, N.W.

Your affectionate old
friend W. S. Landor

# Walter Savage Landor,

A BIOGRAPHY

BY

JOHN FORSTER

IN

VOLUME SECOND

1821 - 1864

[illegible]

# WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

A BIOGRAPHY.

By JOHN FORSTER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

1822–1864.

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*Note.* All the letters quoted in this book are from original sources, and, with a few exceptions specially stated, have not before been printed.

# WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

## BOOK V.

1822–1828. ÆT. 47–53.

### THE IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.

I. *Friends in Italy and England.* II. *The Manuscript on its way.* III. *A Publisher found.* IV. *What the First Volume contained.* V. *What the Second Volume contained.* VI. *How the Book was received.* VII. *The Southey Correspondence.* VIII. *Family Letters.* IX. *New Series of Conversations.* X. *Contents of the New Series.*

### I. Friends in Italy and England.

"Julius Hare will have the kindness to put this letter "into the post-office when he reaches London. I have "long expected to see Mr. Kenyon, in hopes of read- "ing your new poem, of which I have heard not indeed "many but very high eulogies." These are the open- ing lines of the first letter written to Southey by Landor, early in 1822, after Florence had become his settled abode; and in the whole of his later life there are not two pleasanter figures than the friends it names.

It was not however Julius, but Augustus Hare, to

whom the letter was intrusted, as appears from a later passage in it correcting the mistake; for it was not till towards the close of the year that Julius was returning to his law-studies in the Temple, after that visit to his brothers Francis and Marcus at Milan in the preceding winter when he first made acquaintance with the name and writings of Landor, to whom all the brothers Hare, as we shall see, became ultimately known, Augustus and Marcus, as well as Francis and Julius; but the latter two most familiarly. Hare-brained, Southey called them all; and there was sufficient truth in the playful imputation to recommend them especially to this new friend, to whom the impetuosity and eagerness as well as various information of Francis, and the scholarly acquirements and speculative turn of Julius, might have seemed but the reflection of a part of his own larger and more various nature. "The Hares," he wrote to his sisters in 1833, "are beyond all comparison the most "pleasant family *of men* I ever was acquainted with."

His knowledge of them began with Francis, with whom he became intimate soon after establishing himself in the palazzo Medici in Florence; from whose society, he often said, he derived the animation and excitement that had helped him most in the composition of his imaginary conversations; and with whom his friendly relations continued to the close of Hare's life at Palermo.* Not indeed without occasional interruption from that excess or over-vehemence of speech from which neither was free, and which their common friend

* I will quote, as honourable to both, one of Hare's last letters from Palermo: "My dear Landor, It did not require this fresh proof "of your friendship to convince me that you were one of the most "disinterested, one of the most zealous and constant of friends. "That I have long known. *Qualis ab incepto.*" Landor had been making some exertion for Hare's children.

Lord Blessington seems to attribute more especially to Hare, in writing of his marriage in 1827 that il Signor Francesco had been so much improved by it that he at last allowed other people to talk. There is even a hint of the failing in Landor's tender allusion to the friend—

> " . . . who *held mute* the joyous and the wise
> With wit and eloquence, whose tomb, afar
> From all his friends and all his countrymen,
> Saddens the light Palermo."

And by nearly the last remaining of the English residents of those days in Florence, where his own name will always be remembered with love and honour, it has been lately mentioned to me. "I used," says Mr. Seymour Kirkup, "to see him and his friend Francis Hare "together; and it was a constant struggle of competi- "tion and display between them; both often wrong, "although men of strong memory. They used to have "great disputes, mostly on questions of history. Hare "avoided the classics, and Landor the sciences, above "all, the 'exact,' and all relating to numbers except "dates, where, owing to his prodigious memory, he had "generally the advantage when the other gave him the "chance. Hare was often astounded at being corrected. "He was thought infallible; and I remember our con- "sul-general at Rome calling him a monster of learning." But only the pleasantest side of all this was remembered when, on going to England with his wife in 1827, Francis had asked for an introduction to Southey, and Landor described him as among the kindest and most intimate friends he ever had, to say nothing of his learning, his wit, and the inexhaustible spirit and variety of his conversation. "I owe him as much pleasure as I can give "him, and none will be a greater than what these few "lines will procure him."

To Wordsworth, the real bearer of the letter of 1822 had become known some years earlier; and there is interesting mention of both Augustus and Julius in a letter of Wordsworth's to Landor early in 1824, where he says he has a strong desire to become acquainted with the Mr. Hare whom his friend had mentioned, and who, to the honour of Cambridge, was in the highest repute there for his sound and extensive learning. This was Julius; who corresponded with Landor most intimately many years before he personally knew him. "I am "happy to say," continues Wordsworth, "that the Mas- "ter of Trinity-college, my brother, was the occasion of "his being restored to the Muses from the Temple; and "to Mr. Julius's brother Augustus* I am under great "obligation for having volunteered the tuition of my "elder son, who is at New-college Oxford, and who, "though he is not a youth of quick parts, promises from "his assiduity and passionate love of classical literature "to become an excellent scholar. By the bye, he seems "very proud of your Idyls and the accompanying Essay, "as an honour to modern times."

The expectation of seeing that other friend who has been named, Mr. John Kenyon, had to wait several more years for fulfilment; and for so long it was a loss to Landor of the joyousest and pleasantest of all his associates. "Probably Mr. Kenyon has resigned all "idea of coming into Italy," he wrote to Southey, a few weeks after Augustus Hare left; "for it was only "a few days ago that I received a letter from Words- "worth which he had put into some French post-

* "Augustus Hare," writes Southey to Landor in May 1822, "showed me yesterday what you had written of Wordsworth in a "letter to his brother. It is a great pleasure to me when I meet "with a person who knows your writings, and can talk with me "about them and about you."

" office: it bore the usual post-mark of Chambery." This was the letter I have already quoted as partly written by Mrs. Wordsworth because of her husband's failing sight; and it had greatly alarmed Landor. "I " replied directly, telling him what I had formerly " done, and with great success—in about a fortnight. " Sea-bathing and early hours were my remedies. I " am convinced that those who read much and think " little do not suffer; and that thinking has a greater " share in the malady than reading, though perhaps " neither would alone produce it." Southey is adjured at the end of the letter to tell what he is doing in the way of poetry. Spring being always his own idle season, he is himself doing nothing. He has not courage even to ripple the current of his thoughts with a pencil as he walks.

Southey's reply was more about Wordsworth's than his own poetry; and in everything he wrote at this time about that greater master, whose slow but steady advance was all but overshadowing such small enjoyment of poetical fame as Byron's supremacy had left to himself, there is a generous, manly spirit. He has honest pleasure in bringing Landor to Wordsworth's side. His letters are filled with praise of the poet of Rydal-mount. His merits, he rejoices to think, are getting wider acknowledgment every day, in spite of the duncery that cannot understand him, in spite of the personal malignity that assails him, and in spite of the injudicious imitators who are his worst enemies. "He is composing " at this time a series of sonnets upon the religious his- " tory of this country; and marvellously fine they are. " At the same time, not knowing his intention and he " not being aware of mine, I have been treating the " same subject in prose, so that my volume will serve

"as a commentary upon his. Mine will go to press "almost immediately; and I hope to send you both, "with the first volume of the *Peninsular War*, early in "the spring."

Not many weeks later, a letter from Wordsworth himself announced two books as on their way to Florence: "*Ecclesiastical Sketches*, or a sort of Poem in the "Sonnet stanza or measure; and *Memorials of a Tour* "*on the Continent in* 1820. This tour brought me to "Como; a place that, with the scenery of its lake, had "existed in my most lively recollection for upwards of "thirty years. What an addition it would have been "to my pleasure if I had found you there! Time did "not allow me to get farther into Italy than Milan, "where I was much pleased; with the cathedral espe- "cially; as you will collect, if you ever see these poems, "from one of them entitled the Eclipse of the Sun."

The letter went on to announce but small improvement in the infirmity which made its writer so dependent on others, abridged his enjoyments so much by cutting him off from the power of reading, and involved such large losses of time. What was local in the disorder had indeed been even aggravated lately by ill-regulated application, and by what was described as a weakness caused by feelings stronger than the writer's frame could bear. But he had, in one of his intervals of better sight, been reading Landor's Latin poems again, and he speaks in detail of some, especially the Polyxena,* as full of spirit and animation. Still he feels that he ought to tell his friend that he is himself no judge of Latin poetry except upon general principles. He never himself practised Latin verse, not having been educated at one of the public schools. His acquaintance

* See ante, i. 437: also pp. 395 and 456.

with Virgil, Horace, Lucretius, and Catullus, was intimate; but as he never read them with a critical view to composition, great faults in language might be committed that would escape his notice. Any opinion of his on points of classical nicety therefore would be of no value, should he be so inconsiderate as to offer it.

Wordsworth appears nevertheless to have received real pleasure from the Latin poems, though, like Southey, he was impatient of time given to them which he thought might be better given to English poetry. "Still I must express the wish that you would gratify "us by writing in English. In all that you have writ- "ten in your native tongue there are stirring and noble "things, and that is enough for me. In a tract of "yours which I saw some years ago at Mr. Southey's, "I was struck by a piece on the War of the Titans,* "and I was pleased to find also rather an out-of-the- "way image in which the present hour is compared to "the shade on the dial.† It is a singular coincidence "that in the year 1793, when I first became an author, "I illustrated the same sentiment precisely in the same

* This allusion is to Chrysaor (republished in *Hellenics*, pp. 105-111), a poem of which the treatment as well as subject is Titanic. Southey equally admired it; singling out the impious address to Jove, "Whom nations kneel to, not whom nations know;" and the giant rebel's angry horror at his overthrow:

> ". . the Sacrilege
> Rais'd up his head astounded, and accurst
> The stars, the destinies, the gods . .
> But answer heard he none. The men of might
> Who gather'd round him formerly, the men
> Whom, frozen at a frown, a smile revived,
> Were far: enormous mountains interposed,
> Nor ever had the veil-hung pine outspread
> O'er Tethys then her wandering leafless shade."

That last image of the sail has a wonderful beauty in it.

† I have quoted the piece, ante, i. 180.

"manner." A comment of still more striking interest follows upon a passage in another book of Landor's, his *Simonidea*,* seen also on Southey's table.

Landor's observation was to the effect that the sonnet was a structure of verse incompatible with the excursive genius of our commanding language. "You

* The *Simonidea*, a half-crown pamphlet of 98 pages (ante, i. 255–6) printed at Bath in February 1806, was so called because its opening short pieces were dedicated to the memory of the dead, a species of composition in which Simonides excelled. Among them, for example, were a portion of the lines to Rose Aylmer's memory, which I did not believe to have been printed so early (this exquisite poem I have given in a more perfect state from his later letters, ante, i. 497); those on Mrs. Lambe (i. 201); and others to Nancy Jones, the Iöne of his youth (i. 199). The sonnet referred to by Wordsworth is characterised in the preface as "a poem on Philoctetes by a Mr. "Russell which would authorise him to join the shades of Sophocles "and Euripides." By what slight touches delightful effects can be missed, or be produced, will be shown by mention of Charles Lamb's favourite little poem as published in this volume. The charm of the repetition of the words "Rose Aylmer" at close of the first and opening of the second stanza has no existence here, "For, Aylmer, all "were thine," being the original text, "Sweet Aylmer" immediately following; and the fulness of meaning which is given to the "night "of memories and of sighs" exhibits no trace in the tautology of the "night of sorrows and of sighs" as printed in the original. The (anticipated) profits of the volume were of course given away, with a remark in the preface too characteristic to be lost. "I bear no "disrespect towards men who write for emolument, although I never "did; even when I was rather extravagant and very poor. For I "always found enough anxiety attending composition, without the "voluntary penance of supporting at the end of my exertions an "outstretched expectation of gain. If anything of profit should arise "from these trifles, the printer will give it to the hospital. This I "think proper to mention, that the prudes of both sexes, who may "discover or imagine certain sins in them, may also consider that "something has been done for atonement and absolution." His last allusion anticipates the attack on some of the Latin verses which Byron subsequently made, and which the writer of *Don Juan* might hardly have been expected to make if Landor had not been Southey's friend. The volume ended with six pages of hexameters "Ad Ro-"bertum Fratrem," in which a certain critic who had made the brothers the subject of remark was mercilessly assailed.

" commend," says Wordsworth upon this, "the fine " conclusion of Russell's sonnet upon Philoctetes,* and " depreciate that form of composition. I do not won- " der at this. I used to think it egregiously absurd, " though the greatest poets since the revival of litera- " ture have written in it. Many years ago my sister " happened to read to me the sonnets of Milton, which " I could myself at that time repeat; but somehow or " other I was then singularly struck with the style of " harmony, and the gravity and republican austerity of " those compositions. In the course of the same after- " noon I produced three sonnets, and soon after many " others; and since that time, and from want of resolu- " tion to take up anything of length, I have filled up " many a moment in writing sonnets which, if I had " never fallen into the practice, might easily have been " better employed."

In the same letter Wordsworth cleared up the mystery of the missing Mr. Kenyon. He had left Rydalmount in the previous September with the intention of proceeding directly to Italy, but had changed his purpose and taken a wife instead; forgetting to send on to its destination the letter that was to introduce him to Landor. He was again talking of starting for the Continent with his wife, but only for the summer, so that this promised visitor would probably not reach Florence. But there were other visitors his friend would hear of soon. "It is reported here that Byron, Shelley, Moore, " and Leigh Hunt (I do not know if you have heard of all " these names) are to lay their heads together in some " town of Italy for the purpose of conducting a journal " to be directed against everything in religion, in morals, " and probably in government and literature, which our

* See ante, i. 194.

" forefathers have been accustomed to reverence. The " notion seems very extravagant, but perhaps the more " likely to be realised on that account." Could he only see what was now the popular literature of London! His sojourn in Italy had at least removed him from the presence of the trash which issued hourly from the press in England, and tended to make disgusting the very name of writing and books. Wordsworth was himself so situated as to see little of it, but he could not stop his ears, and he sometimes envied Landor the distance that separated him altogether from the intrusion.

News of Southey was not forgotten. He had left Rydal-mount after a visit of two or three days, just before Landor's last letter reached it. He was well, and making continued progress in many works—his *History of the Peninsular War;* a Book on the Church of England; two Poems; "with regular communica- " tions in the *Quarterly Review* into the bargain." Had Landor heard of the attack of Byron upon him, and his answer? His lordship had lost as much by that affair as Southey had gained, whose letter was circulated in almost every newspaper in England. Southey's son, too, continued to thrive, promising well; and the rest of his family were flourishing. "I am glad," Wordsworth adds, " that you also are a father, and I wish for " a peep at your boys, with yourself to complete the " trio."

But beside his boys there was another production of Landor's of which his fellow-poet had lately heard, and wished also to peep at, perhaps more eagerly. Not only had Southey told him of the Manuscript Conversations shortly before, but that it was Landor's intention to offer to himself the dedication of them when printed; and thus ran the closing words of his present letter:

" I expect your book with impatience. I shall at all " times be glad to hear from you, and shall be proud to " receive any public testimony of your esteem."

Almost at the same moment Landor was writing to Southey of such of the conversations as he had completed: " I have waited several weeks, hoping to find an " opportunity of sending them to Longman. If any- " thing should prevent him from undertaking the pub- " lication, the terms of which I leave at his discretion, " I would offer them to Mawman, to whose house I " once went in company with Parr." The old swift impatience! Before he has even sent them to one publisher he is thinking of another, and multiplying all the possible sources from which disappointment or vexation could arise to him. With what results we shall see.

## II. The Manuscript on its way.

Writing on the 3d of June to Southey, Landor tells him that, some little time before, Wordsworth had written giving better account of him than of himself, and that his friend Dr. Richards had arrived since then, " and we conversed a good deal together about both of " you. On his asking me what I had written of late " or was occupied in writing, I could only say that I " had sent a manuscript to London, which ought to " have arrived on the eighteenth of April, by Captain " Vyner of the life-guards, but that Longman, to " whom it was addressed, had given me no account of " it."

This MS. was the first portion of the *Imaginary Conversations*. But a post-letter between Florence and London took then from eleven to fourteen days, and if the captain had dropped his precious freight in Pater-

noster-row at the instant of arrival, Landor could not by the promptest conceivable despatch have learnt this any earlier than the first week in May. Yet some days before even that date he had swiftly and decisively informed the Longmans by post in what way four copies of *the book* might be sent to him. Four copies of the printed book while yet the types to be used in composing it were without form or place! It was the old impetuous way; but though it probably surprised Paternoster-row a little, no sign was made from that respectable quarter. There was absolute silence up to the time when this letter of the 3d of June described the torments that the silence had occasioned.

"I left entirely to Longman the conditions on which
" he might publish my book, and I wrote again a full
" month ago to him informing him how he might for-
" ward to me four copies. He has taken no notice
" whatever either of my manuscript or my letters.
" Will you do me the kindness to request him to send
" the former to Mawman, who I believe will undertake
" it, leaving it at his discretion. This disappointment
" has brought back my old bilious complaint, together
" with the sad reflection on that fatality which has fol-
" lowed me through life, of doing everything in vain. I
" have however had the resolution to tear in pieces all
" my sketches and projects, and to forswear all future
" undertakings. I try to sleep away my time, and pass
" two-thirds of the twenty-four hours in bed. I may
" speak of myself as of a dead man. I will say, then,
" that these *Conversations* contained as forcible writing
" as exists on earth. They perhaps may come out after
" my decease, and the bookseller will enrich some friend
" of his by attributing them to him, and himself by em-
" ploying him, as the accredited author of them, on any

" other subjects. If they are not really lost, or set aside
" for this purpose, I may yet have the satisfaction of
" reading them here at Florence, and perhaps they may
" procure me some slight portion of respect."

Such perverted ingenuity of self-torment even Rousseau might have envied, nor has the wonderful *Confessions* a more curious page. Beginning and ending not unhopefully, hope has entirely vanished in the interval. He thinks his venture wrecked; accepts the ill-luck as part of a fatality that attends him; and throws up everything. All the projects he had formed he abandons, and all the sketches connected with his lost achievement he destroys. He takes to his bed, and will sleep away the rest of his time. As in future therefore he can only regard himself in the light of a dead man, he thinks he may say how good the perished *Conversations* were; and with this arises suddenly another not unnatural thought, that perhaps they were too good to be lost. What if they have fallen among thieves instead, and the thieves are only waiting the chance of their author's death to make out of them a harvest of money as well as fame? A fancy he finds so aggravating that he turns suddenly the other side of the picture, puts off his intention of dying, and hopes he may yet have the satisfaction not merely of reading his printed book in Florence, but of getting out of it a little fame for himself.

Nor has this better mood subsided on the 21st of the same month, the date of his next letter to Southey, when, though he is still without certain tidings of the manuscript, and not without misgivings, he is far from despair. He is at work to recover a copy, but believes the original may yet turn up in London, and mentions a circumstance extenuatory if not exculpatory of the Longmans. " In the few lines I wrote to you the other

" day I expressed the grief I had experienced, I know " not whether from Longman entirely, or from Captain " Vyner of the guards to whom my parcel was in- " trusted by a Mr. Olivieri of Florence. I afterwards " wrote to Longman requesting he would inform me " whether he had received the parcel; but he returned " no answer. These fellows are ignorant and indiffer- " ent how much suffering they may occasion. I shall " request a friend of mine to demand the manuscript; " and shall try some other means of having it printed " next year. I have passed the last eighteen days and " nights in trying to recover all parts of it. I am " afraid I have lost several, as a great deal was written " on scraps of paper. I have lost my patience at all " events, and the remainder of my health by it. I am " afraid no exertion will enable me to complete this " most toilsome of all labours before my friend Dr. " Richards leaves Tuscany."

The mystery was not cleared up till nearly three months later, when, writing to Southey on the 16th of September, Landor tells him that the manuscript which he had so bitterly bewailed for not arriving in the Row by the 18th of April, had not actually arrived there till the 19th of August, and that the reproaches he had heaped on the Longmans for unanswered letters were at least equally divisible between them and himself. " Longman, in a letter I received last week, informs " me that the parcel containing my MS. reached him " only on the nineteenth of August; and that, in both " mine, I had only requested him to inform me when " it arrived. If so, both he and I were equally stupid: " I for not being more explicit, he for not being aware " that its delay was far more important than the hour " of its arrival. Meantime after much agitation I had

" intrusted Mr. Hare, brother of Augustus Hare whom
" you have seen, with the care of delivering it to Maw-
" man for printing. Hare is very anxious to be pre-
" sented to you. He is a most acute and well-read
" man. I told him I would mention him to you, which
" I have done in my other letter. Among my scraps
" and projects I had filled a couple of sheets (I think)
" with a conversation between you and Porson. In my
" bitter vexation at the miscarriage of my MS, I threw
" away whatever I could lay my hands on. Some days
" ago I found an old letter with part of it, in which
" were some remarks on Wordsworth's poetry. I en-
" larged on these, and there is now a dialogue between
" you and him on this subject."

A point of some delicacy is afterwards touched upon. He had offered the dedication of his book to Wordsworth, and the offer, as we have seen, had been accepted with pride. But it was not to be. "I had intended to
" inscribe the dialogues to Wordsworth, knowing that
" he has felt pain from his unprincipled adversaries,
" and wishing to remove it by the expression of oppo-
" site opinions from a man whose judgment in these
" matters he would value more than theirs. The lan-
" guage of Porson indeed is not without its sharpness.
" I have made him escape from you rather than yield;
" though I have extorted from him a compliment to
" you, such as I think I could have extorted even if
" he were alive. I have however written with such as-
" perity and contemptuousness of the people in power,
" that a sense of delicacy would not permit me to place
" Wordsworth's name before the volume." And now comes his reason for having handled so sharply the people in power. "Why have these rascals suffered me
" to be insulted by their agents?—me, who never asked

" them for anything, and who was silent when I thought " them wrong in their measures? Out of four thousand " English here I was selected for slight and contempt! " the only man in all the four thousand who ever acted " with disinterestedness for the public good, or who will " be remembered a year after his death. Under no other " system could this have happened. It could not have " happened in Russia or in Turkey. In those coun- " tries men who are superior to others in virtue and " intelligence are promoted and rewarded. I wanted " neither. I did not even claim respect. I would only " have avoided disrespect, disdain, and insult. So long " as such wretches are in power and employment, I " am the avowed and unmitigable enemy of those who " countenance them, and of the government that allows " it. My peace and health have suffered; and, what " is worse, my compositions. These bitter waters soak " through their most solid parts, and there is hardly " a plant that does not taste of them. It appears to " me that there will be about thirteen sheets in duo- " decimo. If Mawman begins to print on the 5th of " October (he will receive the MS. on the 1st), they " will be finished by the end of the month; and I have " ordered a copy to be sent to you, with one for Words- " worth, at Longman's. There are now twenty-three " Conversations."

Recovering breath from this philippic, which was but the expression given by his wild irascibility to a commonplace dispute with some members of the British Legation in Florence, who will read the lines added about Mawman without laughter mingling with pain? Nothing literally is known to the writer but that the MS. will be taken to that publisher; yet upon this frailest of foundations is built at once not only its acceptance, but

a series of operations on the part of all to be concerned in producing it, of such unequalled vigour as will insure a printed book in five-and-twenty days. Thus with headlong eagerness was Landor ever raising up inexhaustible provision for disappointment and trouble. Sisyphus was nothing to a self-torturer who might at any time of his own accord have taken his hand from the stone.

## III. A Publisher found.

Mawman declined the book as Longman had declined it. It was next taken to a publisher named Martin, and by him also refused. Then it was taken to Valpy, who proposed terms that could not be acceded to. In these negotiations nearly six months passed; and it was March 1823 when Landor again wrote to Southey, soon after he had instructed Julius Hare to carry the manuscript for another chance to Ridgway. Busied in all the interval with additions and improvements, interested more than at first in the variety of subjects he has opened, adding and inventing daily from unsuspected riches of resource, and with every fresh demand upon his power finding its energy and productiveness unfailing, Landor was by this time so satisfied with his progress, so confident in the value of his amendments, and so occupied in the task of transmitting them to Hare, that he had happily not overtormented himself with the succession of unsympathising publishers who have churlishly refused his book, and was even ready himself to pay for a printer if no one else would do it. But he was in some trouble as to Wordsworth.

"So long is it since I have heard from you that it appears as if we lived, conversed, and corresponded in some happier and

past state of existence. Wordsworth, I hope, is not offended that I have changed my intention of dedicating my projected work to him. While it contained for the greater part subjects unconnected with politics, I could do it without the fear of injuring him; but as I have now doubled, and more than doubled, the quantity of matter, and as the political opinions of many characters introduced are widely different from those in fashion, I feared lest anyone should attempt to wrong him by presuming that he favoured the opinions by accepting the dedication. Introducing a conversation on his works between you and Porson, I could praise him with more delicacy and more discretion. Among my new conversations are Bacon and Hooker, Marcus Cicero and his brother Quinctus; and to you I need not express the difficulty of my task. The dialogue between the latter two takes place on the eve of Cicero's death, at his Formian villa. Mr. Hare tells me you have assisted him in his attempts to obtain me a printer. I desire no profits, if any should arise from the publication; and I would take upon myself half the loss, provided that only three hundred and fifty copies were printed in octavo. There will be about 22 sheets. It appears to me that all important questions should be fairly and fully discussed. I invite criticism and defy power. It will vex me if I am at last obliged to employ a printer who publishes only pamphlets for the mob, conscious as I am that in two thousand years there have not been five volumes of prose equal in their contents to this. By volumes I mean the entire works of one author. I have wearied my excellent friend Mr. Hare to death with perpetual corrections and insertions. He never even saw me. He does not complain of his trouble, occupied as he is in other literary labours; but reproves my attacks on Catholicism, to which he appears more than moderately inclined. There is no religion or party to which he would not be an ornament and a support. I have not yet received your books—these alone can lessen the anxiety I feel about mine. It is not improbable that I forgot to tell you I had another son born five months ago. I gave him my names, Walter Savage. He is strong and quiet, and disposed to be as lively and laughing as the others. This is all we want for the present, and the foundation of all we shall want for the future."

Another month was hardly gone when the publisher was found at last. Landor's suggestion of the "printer

"who publishes only pamphlets for the mob" having ended like the rest by Mr. Ridgway's politely declining, Julius Hare was left to his own judgment. He had now quitted the Temple for a classical tutorship in Cambridge, upon the joint persuasion of Whewell and Wordsworth's brother, then Master of Trinity; but, having contributed to the *London Magazine* in his Temple days, he had a favourable knowledge of its proprietor, John Taylor, and to him he made application. "I considered him," he says, "the most honourable man in the trade; and after no small difficulties, arising however altogether from conscientious scruples and in no degree from considerations of profit, we came to an agreement; or I ought rather to say, I was so weary of soliciting publisher after publisher, and so anxious to put the work into the hands of a respectable man, that I forced Taylor to undertake it." Landor's instruction as to terms had been that the publisher was to receive all the profits, and he would himself engage, provided the impression were limited to 500 copies, to make up any loss at the end of one or two years. Making sure however of a larger sale than this, Hare proposed, as a compromise between Landor's offer and the usual half-profits plan, that both the loss and the gain should be shared. And it was so settled.

But the difficulties were not over. The printing had hardly begun when Taylor's "conscientious scruples" broke out strongly at some passages which he held to be objectionable. He required a too plain-spoken word put in Cromwell's mouth to be removed, and Hare, having heard from Southey that Landor would certainly not give way on the point,* resisted.

* I quote from Landor's letter to Southey of the 19th March 1822: "There is one sentence which will perhaps shock the fasti-

Upon this Taylor said its retention would make the difference between his printing a thousand copies or two hundred and fifty less; and Hare replying that he had no alternative, the word held its place and the impression was limited to seven hundred and fifty.

More serious discussion then arose upon a passage in the conversation between Middleton and Magliabechi, the result of which was a reference by Hare to Southey to ask if either he or Wordsworth would consent to look over the proofs, Taylor undertaking to be bound by the decision if either of them approved what he condemned. Whereupon Southey wrote this to Landor (8th May 1823); and, after declaring his belief that Taylor was a man very superior to most of his trade, and that he had demurred really on grounds of principle, said he had himself at once replied that he would most willingly (Wordsworth having gone to the Netherlands) take upon himself the responsibility suggested, and act for his friend in the matter as his friend would by him, taking care that wherever there was an omission the place should be marked. He added that the specimen Landor had sent him of the dialogue of the Ciceros was delightful, and that Julius Hare spoke of the whole just in such terms as he should expect it to deserve.

On the 31st of the same month Landor replied. He felt so much pleasure on receiving Southey's letter, he said, that it hardly could be increased by reading it, although the information it gave him satisfied all his wishes.

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" diousness of some English readers. Cromwell says, speaking of " the sectaries, &c. &c. No other mode of expression would be so " characteristic. I would however be sparing of these flowers from " the Deanery-garden, and present no other of them." The word appeared in both first and second editions, but in the collected edition of 1846 it was expunged by himself.

"The first thing I did was to write instantly to Taylor, and I hope he will receive what I have written in despite of a defective address, for I directed the sheets, containing a few lines to him and additional matter for the Conversations and some notes, 'Messrs. Taylor, printers, London,' not knowing more. Omit whatever you think ought to be omitted. Before I knew anything of Taylor's proposal to you, I had hoped to obviate his objection by the following lines: 'The author not only has 'authorised, but has requested the editor to mark with his re-'probation whatever in these Conversations may be injurious 'to the national establishments, or irritating to the public feel-'ing. The characters he introduces must speak characteristi-'cally and strongly, often with prejudices and sometimes with 'perverseness. His editor then marks this sentence as liable 'to do mischief, if general principles are drawn from it un-'warily, and if it is not considered as the fancy of the indi-'vidual who utters it, rather than as a theory laid down for 'establishment by the writer.' Taylor will not expect that Demosthenes (as I tell him) should talk like Canning. The language of the ancients is suitable to them, and can do no more harm than their works, which I presume he would not hesitate to print if a new edition were called for. Enough on this. . . . What in the name of heaven can Wordsworth do in the Netherlands? Italy and Greece are the only countries which I would pay a postillion eighteenpence to see. Men in other countries are less interesting than beavers; whole generations of them are not worth so many barrels of dry figs. If I were still at Como, I would however go as far as into the Netherlands to see Wordsworth; odious as travelling is to me, and never accomplished without a fever of some days."

Landor's characteristic proposal, it is needless to say, would only have given greater force to Taylor's objections by giving greater prominence to the questionable passages. Southey preferred to act on the powers of omission also here given him, and some few sentences were condemned accordingly. But as to the passage in the Middleton, in which that not very orthodox divine was represented as disputing the efficacy and even the propriety of prayer, Southey was unable to see the force

of Taylor's objection, and the point had again to be referred to Florence. "According to the last note I "received from Hare," wrote Landor to Southey on the 2d July,

"Taylor objects to some passages in the dialogue of Middleton. It appears to me that I have acted fairly. I have given the known sentiments of both parties. The fabricators of religions for state purposes found the pure and simple doctrines of Jesus Christ unfit for them. He says: 'When you pray, you shall pray thus.' For He was the least violent of all innovators. Whatever leads to truth should be left upon the road: to stop and interrogate is right enough; but not to thrust it aside, break it, or efface it. Hare kindly says he would let it pass, from a love of free discussion. I shall be delighted if your sentiments are the same, and shall be contented if they are not. I have been so often wrong, that I doubt of myself perpetually. In regard to prayer, if ever I prayed at all, I would not transgress or exceed the order of Jesus Christ. In my opinion all Christianity (as priests call their inventions) is to be rejected excepting His own commands. There is quite enough in these for any man to perform; which he will be best induced to do by reading His life and reflecting on His sufferings. His immediate followers were, for the greater part, as hot-headed fanatics as Whitfield and Wesley, and probably no less ambitious. These however are truths I would not propagate; for it is false that all truth is *always* good. Suppose, for instance, that a man should be told that his wife or daughter had been guilty of a certain fault seven years ago. It might be true; but it would create much misery, and might precipitate them again from the purity to which they had returned. To increase the sum of happiness, and to diminish the sum of misery, is the only right aim both of reason and of religion. All superstition tends to remove something from morality, and to substitute something in its place; and is therefore no less a wrong to sound probity than to sound sense."

But though Hare would have let the thing pass, and Southey thought it admissible, Taylor stuck to his objection. It is not easy to reconcile this with his own offer to be bound by Southey's decision; but, incom-

patible as such a view appears with any suggestion of a compromise, Hare thought that Taylor had never barred his right of electing to decline the whole matter. "I had agreed," he said afterwards, "to print what "Southey sanctioned; but of course this was only "binding to a certain extent, and could not oblige "Taylor to print what he thought morally wrong, and "hurtful to Christianity. He may have been mis-"taken: I thought he was. I thought the argument "against prayer, as an argument, good for nothing. "I may have been equally mistaken; but at all events "I cannot blame Taylor for acting conscientiously ac-"cording to his judgment." It should be added that Taylor repeatedly desired Hare to find another publisher, and recommended him one (Mr. Simpkin) who would feel no such scruples as he had himself; but Hare disliked the thought of changing. Taylor had shown so much interest in the book, and had taken such pains to have it handsomely and correctly printed, that Hare was more anxious than ever to continue with him; and, rather than break, even ventured at last to make the alterations in the Middleton. This was hardly judicious. It got rid of a difficulty for the time; but Landor had a ground of complaint on discovering it, and some excuse afterwards (a thing that did not often happen to him) for quarrelling with a very worthy man.

It was during the Middleton discussions and delays that Hare gave Taylor permission to print in the *London Magazine* the dialogue between Southey and Porson containing the comment on Wordsworth's poetry. This was done to please Wordsworth, Landor willingly consenting; and in the July number of 1823 it appeared. It excited considerable interest; and much curiosity was

raised for the appearance of the book, which the same magazine had promised would be immediate: but for several more months the promise was not kept, and Wordsworth meanwhile wrote to Landor.

Sharp as were some of Porson's sayings, the poet had reason to be proud of the tone and matter of the dialogue; and it was of no common import, at this turning-hour of his fame, that a champion of such appearance and prowess should declare upon his side. Southey speaks of him as in those latter times the glory of their country; and when reminded that a rabble had persecuted him, and a Jeffrey made him his prey, retorts with a couple of allegories, that an elephant was born to be consumed by ants in the midst of his unapproachable solitudes, and that in the creation God had left his noblest creature at the mercy of a serpent. Even Porson's severity is so tempered as not to exclude the highest claims. He condemns the habit of pursuing thoughts too far, of showing them entirely rather than advantageously, of accumulating instead of selecting them, in language that the poet might in earlier days have read with inexpressible advantage; and his bitterest censure of the line about the "witness" and "second birth" that then disfigured the stanza of Laodamia descriptive of the Elysian-fields,* hardly detracted from its accompanying magnificent eulogy that the poem was one which Sophocles might have exulted to own, and that the former part of the stanza might have been heard with shouts of rapture in the regions it describes.

Wordsworth's letter was dated the 21st of January 1824, and began by telling Landor he was both tired and ashamed of waiting any longer. Many months

* Removed afterwards in consequence of Landor's criticism.

had he looked for his dialogues, "and they never ap-
" pear." The expectation of the book had prevented his answering Landor's former letter, in which were mentioned some unpleasant topics relating to the writer's own feelings; but as a second letter had since arrived not adverting to them, he hoped the storm was blown over. Wordsworth then went on to say, that having been at Keswick in the summer, Southey had read to him part of the dialogue in which he is introduced as a speaker with Porson ("it had appeared, something I must say
" to my regret, in a magazine"), and he had since read the remainder himself. "You have condescended to
" minute criticism upon the *Laodamia*. I concur with
" you in the first stanza,* and had several times at-
" tempted to alter it upon your grounds. I cannot
" however accede to your objection to 'the second
" birth' in the later stanza merely because the expres-
" sion has been degraded by conventiclers. I certainly
" meant nothing more by it than the *eadem cura* and
" the *largior æther* &c. of Virgil's sixth Æneid. All re-
" ligions owe their origin or acceptation to the wish of
" the human heart to supply in another state of exist-
" ence the deficiencies of this, and to carry still nearer
" to perfection what we admire in our present condi-
" tion; so that there must be many modes of expression,
" arising out of this coincidence or rather identity of
" feeling, common to all mythologies; and under this
" observation I should shelter the phrase from your

* Porson also objected to the second and fourth line of the first stanza as terminating too much alike, and to "have I required" and " have I desired" as worse than prosaic. It is curious however that Wordsworth has left unaltered the lines thus objected to, though he says he agrees in the objection; while, in deference to a criticism which he states himself unable to accede to, he has altered altogether the subsequent passage.

" censure. But I may be wrong in the particular case,
" though certainly not in the general principle."

By this reasoning Wordsworth is further led to a remark of Landor's in the letter last received from him —that he was disgusted with all books that treat of religion. He was afraid it was a bad sign in himself, Wordsworth says, that he had little relish for any other. Even in poetry it was the imagination only—namely, that which is conversant with or turns upon infinity—that powerfully affected him. "Perhaps I ought to
" explain. I mean to say that, unless in those passages
" where things are lost in each other, and limits vanish,
" and aspirations are raised, I read with something too
" much like indifference." But all great poets were in this view powerful religionists; and therefore, among many literary pleasures lost to Wordsworth, he had not yet to lament over that of verse as departed. But politics! What did Landor say to Bonaparte on the one side and the Holy Alliance on the other? to the prostrate Tories? and to the contumelious and vacillating Whigs, who disliked or despised the Church, and seemed to care for the State only as far as they were striving, without hope, as he honestly believed, to get the management of it? As to the low-bred and headstrong Radicals, they were not worth a thought. He had himself, indeed, small interest of any kind in the matter at present. His politics used always to impel him more or less to look out for coöperation with a view to embody them in action; but feeling himself utterly deprived of this interest, the subject, as matter of reflection, languished accordingly. Cool heads no doubt there were in the country, but moderation naturally kept out of sight; and, wanting associates, Wordsworth declared himself to be less of an Englishman than he once

was, or could wish to be. At the close of his letter he wishes very much to have Landor's opinion of Dante. "It has become lately, owing a good deal I "believe to the example of Schlegel, the fashion to "extol him above measure. I have not read him for "many years. His style I used to think admirable "for conciseness and vigour without abruptness; but I "own that his fictions often struck me as offensively "grotesque and fantastic, and I felt the poem tedious "from various causes. . . . Farewell. Be so kind as write "soon, and believe me ever sincerely and affectionately "yours, WM. WORDSWORTH." What Landor replied does not appear; but his opinion of Dante was given publicly some years later in very memorable fashion.

A month after Wordsworth's letter, on the last day of February 1824, Southey announced to Landor the completion of the printing of the *Imaginary Conversations*. "Your dialogues have been delayed some three "weeks by an involuntary fault of mine in not send- "ing to Julius Hare a passage from that between "Cicero and his brother. It is not worth explaining "how this happened, and how the wrong passage was "forwarded to me in London. It is remedied now. "The first thing I did on my return home from a "long absence was to transmit the insertion. The "last sheet has probably by this time been struck off; "and you may perhaps receive news of its publication "as early as this will reach you."* And now I will venture myself to interpose some account, in a little detail, of what the book really was which thus was ready to be given to the world. It contained thirty-six conversations, eighteen in each volume; and these

* Omitted, with other passages, in the letter as printed (*Life*, iii. 115), which is also otherwise incorrect.

I will attempt so to describe as to show in each case the drift or design, something of the varieties of style, as well as what is possible of the illustrations of character, and preëminently of Landor's own character, that surprisingly abound in them.

## IV. What the First Volume contained.

The opening subject was taken from our early history. The first Richard, returning from his imprisonment, is met by the Abbot of Boxley, and to his old confessor relates the story of his wanderings and his captivity. The moral of it is contempt for the princes of Europe, and respect for Saladin. Creatures, he had discovered *them* to be, "of less import than the sea-mews on their "cliffs; men praying to be heard and fearing to be un- "derstood; ambitious of another's power in the midst of "penitence; avaricious of another's wealth under vows "of poverty; and jealous of another's glory in the ser- "vice of their God." Was *that* Christianity, and was Saladin to be damned if he despised it? In him he had seen wisdom, courage, courtesy, fidelity, and the power to judge a hero's nature by his own. "To them "he sent pearls and precious stones, to me figs and "dates; and I resolved from that moment to contend "with him and to love him." Excellent character is in that. But the story told by the Lion-heart has also another lesson. As Richard sailed along the realms of his family, little else had been visible to him than sterile eminences and extensive shoals; and in the wide ocean, when these were fled behind him, he found himself little of a monarch. Old men guided him, boys instructed him; and when thus he had acquired the names of his towns and harbours, and been shown the extent of

his dominions, one cloud, that dissolved in an hour, covered them. Not so the capacity and courage of the men by whom they had been governed. "What "nation hath ever witnessed such a succession of brave "kings two hundred years together as have reigned un- "interruptedly in England? Example formed them, "danger nurtured them, difficulty instructed them, "peace and war in an equal degree were the sup- "porters of their throne." Thus, on the first page of a work which, as he said to Francis Hare, it was his pride so to have planned as to be under no restraint from claim of citizenship or country to withhold what might be due to men of every race and clime, Landor impressed unmistakeably that other pride which he never could suppress, of having been born himself an Englishman.

For interlocutors in his second dialogue he had chosen bearers of names also very dear to his countrymen, Sir Philip Sidney and his friend Lord Brooke; the subject of whose talk, among the wilds and glades of Penshurst, is of the art of contentment and a happy life, and its principal object to show that, however wisely or unwisely we may look upon contentment as the cause of happiness, we shall find still that since we are contented because we are happy, and not happy because we are contented, the happiness to be desired must be that only which will satisfy what is noblest in ourselves. "We are all desirous of pushing forward "into every stage of life excepting that alone which "ought reasonably to allure us most, as opening to "us the *via sacra* along which we move in triumph to "our eternal country. We labour to get through the "moments of our life as we would to get through a "crowd. Such is our impatience, such our hatred of

"procrastination, in everything but the amendment of "our practices and the adornment of our nature, one "would imagine we were dragging Time along by "force, and not he us." Not a few of the most subtle chords of its theme, old as the world itself, are touched in this dialogue; and, drawn alike from the knowledge of his books and his life, Sidney's character found in it very perfect expression. With much delicacy this was marked in what he is made to say of the love and practice of poetry and its independence of other than its own rewards; which could hardly have been written by a man ignorant of the *Apology* and the *Arcadia*, though these are not reproduced even in the turn of a phrase. Never indeed, throughout all the series, was there anything in the dialogues borrowed or merely imitative. Not to insert in any one of them "a single sentence "written by, or recorded of, the personages who are "supposed to hold them," had been the pride of Landor's design; he adhered to it inflexibly; it helped him to truth of character where least careful as to truth of circumstance; and, when he makes Sidney talk of the difficulty of writing as the ancients have written without borrowing a thought or an expression from them, we see the personal reference. But with what Brooke says of the spot amid Penshurst woods in which he had found his friend, I must quit the dialogue, of which Julius Hare said well that it was calm and serene as a summer evening. Among its many wise and noble things there may be finer than this, but there is none that more clings to the memory. "What a pleasant spot, "Sidney, have you chosen here for meditation! A soli- "tude is the audience-chamber of God."

Another English subject he took for his third dialogue from the supposed talk of Henry the Fourth with

Sir Arnold Savage, the first recorded Speaker of the House of Commons; and here were strokes of character that are excellent, as well as touches that exhibit in a life-like way the place and the significance in history of both the sovereign and subject who are talking before us. Henry, bent upon completing the conquest of France, makes rough recital of what his Commons will have to provide him with; is warned by Savage of things he will require far more than any he has enumerated; and, to much eager questioning of what these can be, is reminded of the hearts of his subjects. "Your horse will not gallop far without them, though "you empty into his manger all the garners of Surrey. ". . . The whole people is a good king's household, "quiet and orderly when well treated. . . . Act in "such guise, most glorious Henry, that the king may "say *my* people and the people may say *our* king, and "I then will promise you the enjoyment of a blessing "to which the conquest of France in comparison is as "a broken flag-staff."

Matters critical, such as may have interested literary men at the close of Porson's life, and incidental notices of the poetry of Wordsworth, were the subject of the dialogue of Southey and Porson already named, the fourth of the series. Landor here delivered himself sharply, through the mouth of Porson, against canons of criticism at that time in vogue; laughed at Mr. Matthias and his admirers; and quitted himself of an old grudge against his own reviewers in younger days, those "daring ge-"niuses, ensigns and undergraduates, members of Ana-"creontic and Pindaric clubs," to whom his *Phocæans* had been Greek and his *Gebir* foolishness. There is a capital stroke against Gifford, introduced as the little man that followed Southey in the *Critical Review* whose preten-

sions widened every smile his imbecility excited, of whom Porson is made to say that he would certainly, if Homer were living, pat him in a fatherly way upon the cheek, and tell him that "by moderating his fire and "contracting his prolixity, he might give the public be- "fore long something really worth reading." In Porson's mouth also is placed a reply to the charge of inequality in the poetry of the ancients (with whom he classes Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton), saying that it is the property of modern poetry, as it is of modern arms and equipments, to be more uniformly trim and polished, but that the ancients had more strength and splendour if they had also more inequality and rudeness. Very much in character, too, is his plan for the recovery of the miss- ing Greek manuscripts; his belief that the well-directed labour of twenty good scholars might in a few years re- trieve what has been lost by the bigotry of popes and caliphs, and that with a smaller sum than is annually expended on the appointment of some silly young envoy might be recovered some trace of nearly all the writers whose disappearance has been the regret of genius for four centuries. "To neglect what is recoverable is like "rowing away from a crew that is making its escape "from shipwreck." Nor is the old scholar out of place as devil's advocate against Wordsworth, putting his objec- tions with humour and force, and drawing out Southey's defence of his friend. In the detail and niceties of cri- ticism Landor is never so strong as in its generals and principles, but the subject here was handled without un- fairness on either side, and with so much of character on both as to mark their differences even in points of agreement. Where the mistakes of critics are the theme, Southey extenuates while he blames; "clear writers, "like clear fountains, do not seem as deep as they are:

" the turbid look the most profound:" but Porson has no consideration for such adversaries; "they know not " whether they are upon the body of a giant, or upon " one of ordinary size, and bite both indiscriminately." Replying to a friend's remark upon this dialogue, Southey conceded that Porson and himself might not have conversed as Landor had exhibited them; "but we could " neither of us have talked better" he added, and most people will agree with him.

In the fifth dialogue the speakers were Oliver Cromwell and that Michael (misnamed by him Walter) Noble, the friend of Oliver and member for Lichfield in the long parliament, some of whose blood ran in Landor's own veins; his grandfather, Robert Landor of Rugeley, having (in 1732) married the sole daughter and heiress of Noble's grandson Walter, of Chorley-hall Longdon, through whom Landor's father inherited a good estate. The drift of this dialogue is to show Cromwell stubbornly putting aside the intercessions of his friends the republicans for the life of Charles; and there is capital character in the half-humorous, half-evasive way, in which the deeply-set tragic purpose of the Puritan general declares itself. "Why, dost thou verily think me so, Walter?" he says, when his friend has called him cruel. "Perhaps " thou art right in the main; but He alone who fash- " ioned me in my mother's womb, and who sees things " deeper than we do, knows that." Profound touches of this kind contrast well with the stately periods in which the associate of Vane and Harrington has been pleading for mercy. "We should be slow in the cen- " sure of princes, and slower in the chastisement. " Kingship is a profession which has produced few " among the most illustrious, many among the most

"despicable, of the human race. As in our days they "are educated and treated, he is deserving of no slight "commendation who rises in moral worth to the level "of his lowest subject; so manifold and so great are "the impediments. . . Let us consider that, educated in "the same manner and placed in the same position, "we ourselves might have acted as reprovably. Abol- "ish that for ever which must else for ever generate "abuses; and attribute the faults of the man to the "office, not the faults of the office to the man." This conversation was very nearly the only one that pleased the *Quarterly* reviewer, who had probably failed to discover what was really meant by it.

The sixth dialogue—first of a series famous for its range of subject, its variety of treatment, and a familiarity with classic life and thought unparalleled since the revival of letters—brought upon the scene the sages and orators of antiquity. Æschines and Phocion are the speakers; their twofold theme being Demosthenes, and the character and laws of the Athenians. Defects in both are sharply criticised; in the former by Æschines, in the latter by Phocion, whose defence of the great adversary of Philip becomes a lesson in eloquence and government to his rival. The style of the conversation may be judged of by the way in which Phocion checks the impatience of Æschines under the thought of the evil enemies and times that have befallen them, reminding him that no one from without can inflict worse upon a man than he is always inflicting on himself, and that the remedy for both is the same. "The gods have not granted us, Æschines, the choice "of being born when we would; that of dying when "we would, they have. Thank them for it, as one "among the most excellent of their gifts; and remain

" or go, as utility or dignity may require. Whatever " can happen to a wise and virtuous man from his worst " enemy, whatever is most dreaded by the inconsiderate " and irresolute, has happened to him frequently from " himself; and not only without his inconvenience, but " without his observation. We are prisoners as often " as we bolt our doors, exiles as often as we walk to " Munychia, and dead as often as we sleep. It would " be a folly and a shame to argue that these things are " voluntary, and that what our enemy imposes are " not . . . In fine, Æschines, I shall then call the " times bad when they make me so." From the point of view of ancient life that is true philosophy, nor is it, with the proper reserves and limitations, inapplicable wholly to modern thoughts and ways.

The seventh dialogue, with Elizabeth and Burleigh for its speakers, was quite a little masterpiece of humour and character. Here Edmund Spenser's laureatship and pension are talked about; and the queen's pleasant pedantic patronage of the Muses, condescending to those sacred damsels as but another sort of maids-of-honour, shows off by whimsical contrast her minister's complaint that ladies of such doubtful character should so have "choused" her highness. "God's blood!" she swears at his contemptuous laugh over a poet's complaint of neglect, "shall the lady that tieth my garter and shuffles " the smock over my head, or the lord that steadieth " my chair's back while I eat, or the other that looketh " to my buckhounds lest they be mangy, be holden by " me in higher esteem and estate than he who hath " placed me among the bravest of past times, and will " as safely and surely set me down among the loveliest " in the future?" It is in vain that Cecil reiterates the pension and the butt of canary. "The monies are given

"to such men," his mistress rejoins, "that they may "not incline nor be obligated to any vile or lowly occu- "pation; and the canary that they may entertain such "promising Wits as court their company and converse; "and that in such manner there may be alway in our "land a succession of these heirs unto Fame." This may be thought too favourable a view of her highness's regard to letters, but it is true to her character all the same; for the trick of her speech is not better caught in it than her inbred royalty of nature, to which indeed it does greater justice than she ever cared to mete out to herself. "A page of poesy is a little matter; be it so: "but of a truth I do tell thee, Cecil, it shall master full "many a bold heart that the Spaniard cannot trouble." One such heart betrays itself, while Cecil reads at his mistress's command some lines that Edmund has written on the cruelty of the Goddess of Chastity; and there is another little copy of verses by him, read to her by Burleigh, which she thinks of inferior merit, not being written with his wonted fancifulness nor in learned and majestical language, but of which the homely and rustic way moves her the more as demonstrating that since her laureat had resided in Ireland his genius had been dampened by his adversities. Yet not as "a fee grief "due to a single breast" is the sorrow expressed in them. We have all a part in the poet's lament, as he tells how much is lost,

> "When, rising from the turf where youth reposed,
> We find but deserts in the far-sought shore;
> When the huge book of Faery-land lies closed,
> And those strong brazen clasps will yield no more."

Even Burleigh, when his reading was done, may have winced a little under his mistress's closing words:

"Thou mightest toss and tumble in thy bed many nights,

and never eke out the substance of a stanza: but Edmund, if perchance I should call upon him for his counsel, would give me as wholesome and prudent as any of you. We should indemnify such men for the injustice we do unto them in not calling them about us, and for the mortification they must suffer at seeing their inferiors set before them. Edmund is grave and gentle; he complains of Fortune, not of Elizabeth, of courts, not of Cecil. I am resolved, so help me God, he shall have no further cause for his repining. Go, convey unto him those twelve silver spoons, with the apostles on them, gloriously gilded; and deliver into his hand these twelve large golden pieces, sufficing for the yearly maintenance of another horse and groom. Beside which, set open before him with due reverence this Bible, wherein he may read the mercies of God toward those who waited in patience for his blessing; and this pair of crimson silk hose, which thou knowest I have worne only thirteen months, taking heed that the heelpiece be put into good and sufficient restoration, at my sole charges, by the Italian woman nigh the pollard elm at Charing-cross."

Hardly less admirable was the picture of Elizabeth's successor in the eighth dialogue, where the speakers were James the First and Isaac Casaubon, and the principal subject popery. James's oddities of speech had not been so felicitously caught as Elizabeth's vernacular, but his native mother-wit, pedantic folly, shrewd cunning, real learning, dogmatic absurdities, argumentative subtleties, and a hatred of jesuit and presbyter as devouring as his love for himself, were reproduced with humour and success. And it was very well said of this class of the dialogues, I think by Hazlitt, that the verisimilitude arises less from the studied use of peculiar phrases or the exaggeration of peculiar opinions, than from the fact that the writer is so well versed in the productions and characters of those he brings upon the stage that the adaptation takes place unconsciously and without apparent effort. Southey, then fresh from his *Book of the Church*, was unprepared for

such handling by his friend of the weapons of theological controversy; and he found all that portion of the dialogue denouncing the popes, exposing the horrid vices and monstrous beliefs of Rome, and slaying again the thrice-slain Bellarmine, masterly in the extreme. James's discipline even for his bishops was not too much for him.* "If any one of mine in his pruriency should "cast his wild eye askance, and ruffle his mane and "neigh and snort to overleap his boundary, I would "thrust the Bible into his mouth forthwith, and thereby "curb his extravagance. For, M. Isaac, we do possess "this advantage: our bishops acknowledge in spirituals "the sole authority of that sacred book: whereas your "papist, when you push him, slinks off from it as he "lists, now to one doctor, now to another, now to saint, "now to father, now to confessor; and, as these retire "from him and will have nothing to say to him or for "him, he has recourse to tradition, which is anywhere "or nowhere." But Southey's appetite was only for the high-spiced condiments of James: it had no stomach for the stronger meats to which his majesty is invited by Casaubon. "I would authorize no inabilities or pri-"vations for a difference in mere articles of faith: for "instance, it would be a tyranny or madness to declare "a man incapable of beating the enemy because he "believes in transubstantiation: but I would exclude "from all power, all trust, all office, whoever should "assert that any man has legitimate power of any "kind within this realm, unless it repose in, or origi-"nate from, the king or parliament, or both united."

* Southey was an accurate reader; and upon becoming acquainted with Casaubon's letters, which Landor had sent him, wrote out to say that the view they had led the latter to take of the character of James the First very much accorded with the opinion he had himself expressed concerning him. (August 1824.)

The proper correction to James's humorously-unconscious contradictions in claiming for himself what he tramples on the pope for exercising, is excellently supplied throughout by this liberal wisdom of Casaubon.

The ninth dialogue was the first in which Landor appeared in his own person, talking with the Marchese Pallavicini, whose palace he rented at Albaro, and to whose boast of the magnificence of Genoese doorways he makes reply that there are oaken staircases in England as worthy to commemorate, and that he had himself inherited an old ruinous house (at Ipsley) up whose staircase the tenant rode his horse to stable him. The talk throughout is much upon architecture, passing by easy transition from men's houses and gardens to the national or individual peculiarities indicated by them; and dogmatising after the usual fashion of talkers upon art, who seldom fail to find themselves more knowing about it than those whose lives have been devoted to its practice, and whose labours are their theme. But when Landor turns to matters more remote he satisfies the expectation raised. One passage I will quote, for the comment it then provoked and the confirmation it has since received. He is speaking of Rome, and says that Lucullus was the first of the nation who had any idea of amplitude in architecture.

"Julius Cæsar, to whom glory in all her forms and attributes was more familiar than his own Penates, meditated the grandest works of utility and decoration, in the city and out: but he fell a victim to insatiable ambition, and left nothing memorable in his birthplace but Pompey's statue. Augustus did somewhat in adorning the city: but Augustus was no Pericles. Tiberius, melancholy at the loss of a young and beautiful wife borne away from him by policy, sank into that dreadful malady which blighted every branch of the Claudian family, and, instead of embellishing the city with edifices and sculpture, darkened it with disquietudes and suspicions, and retired into a

solitude which his enemies have peopled with monsters. Such atrocious lust, incredible even in madness itself, was incompatible with the memory of his loss and with the tenderness of his grief: nor were his mental powers always estranged. Nero, in the beginning of his government, and indeed five entire years, a virtuous and beneficent prince, was soon affected by the same insanity, but acting differently on his heart and intellect. He never lost sight of magnificence, and erected a palace before which even the splendours of Pericles fade away."

Much gravity of objection was made to this* by the earliest critics of the *Conversations*, and Hazlitt condemned it as the wildest of paradoxes that Tiberius should be put forth for a man of sentiment retired to Capri out of grief for his wife, and Nero promoted into a humane and highly popular person. Yet since that date there are scholars both in Germany and England who have discovered something of truth in both paradoxes; and a learned professor at this very hour is busily engaged in demonstrating, in one of the reviews, that Tiberius was a brilliant soldier and a not unjust or cruel sovereign, and that the turning-point of his life, the cloud which darkened his spirit in youth and never quitted him in age, was the divorce from Vipsania and compelled marriage with Julia, which Landor made the subject of a later and very masterly dialogue. The present one has a characteristic close. The speakers look over at the lofty and grand flight of steps, leading up to a palace just before them, on which Landor's children are playing. "These are my vases, marchese," he cries out: "these are my images, these are decora-
" tions for architecture, this is ornamental gardening,
" and suitable to all countries and climates." Whereupon Pallavicini says that over those steps he had seen

* It appeared originally as a note to the dialogue of *Pericles and Sophocles.*

the wife of a patriotic Italian to whom the palace belonged, the Marchese Cambiagi, dragged and insulted by Austrian soldiers, and that, seeing also the English general looking on, it had occurred to him that our houses of parliament should have animadverted on such an outrage, and our general should have been made to answer for it. To which Landor rejoins: "These two "fingers have more power, marchese, than those two "houses. A pen! he shall live for it. What, with "their animadversions, can they do like this?"

A smile arises here; but it is very certain that in the next following dialogue, the tenth, the "two fingers" leave a scathing mark which the "two houses," by any given number of speeches or resolutions, would have found it hard to remove. "I have been told that among "Landor's *Conversations*," writes Julius Hare in the *Guesses at Truth*, "the most general favourite is that "between General Kleber and some French officers. "If it be so, one may easily see why. Beautiful as "some touches in it are, it is not so far removed as "most of its companions from what other men have "written and can write." It is in truth a story, even a love-story, the dialogue being set in narrative; but all that is suffered or said in it expresses only with more extraordinary force the cruel character of Bonaparte's glory, and its hardening effect on Frenchmen. During the invasion of Egypt a young English officer sitting at the base of the great pyramid, and about to surrender himself to the French, is deliberately slain by a French rifle; and what is found upon him, as they plunder his body, tells the affecting little tale. Among his papers is a poem on the battle of Aboukir, from which one stanza on the desolation of "the land of all marvels in all ages "past" may be taken here.

"O'er cities shadowing some dread name divine
Palace and fane return the hyena's cry,
And hoofless camels in long single line
Stalk slow, with foreheads level to the sky."

The eleventh dialogue introduced Bishop Burnet and Humphrey Hardcastle, and in execution was one of the happiest of the series. The bishop's style is excellently caught: credulous, gossiping, coarse, but with character in every word, amusingly graphic and distinct. The Southey and Byron controversy had been raging just before, and both combatants had tossed about the name of Landor, Byron rhyming it with gander in one of the later cantos of *Don Juan;* when Landor himself by this dialogue took part in the quarrel, delivering his heaviest blows from the mouth of the garrulous bishop. Burnet answers Hardcastle's questions after his uncle Sir Humphrey by rambling off with a delightful humour into all about Sir Hum's flight and escape at the Restoration, his drinking, verse-writing, love-making, and his outwitting Mr. Cowley both in politics and poetry though the king had chosen Abraham to circumvent Hum; and by relating how people used to declare that Hum might have overtopped Abraham altogether if he could have drunk rather less, thought rather more, and felt rather rightlier, for that he had great spunk and spirit, and not a fan was left upon a lap when anyone sang his airs. However, the bishop protests that to sit as arbitrator between two fighting poets and between two fighting game-cocks he should consider equally foolish, only that both were not equally wicked—being firmly of opinion that those things which are the most immoral must always be the most foolish. But in truth, he adds, his unfitness to arbitrate may perhaps be because he doesn't very well know

what poetry is; for who would ever have thought that my lord Rochester's reputed child, Mr. George Nelly, was for several seasons a great poet?

"Yet I remember the time when he was so famous a one, that he ran after Mr. Milton up Snow-hill, as the old gentleman was leaning on his daughter's arm from the Poultry, and, treading down the heel of his shoe, called him a rogue and liar, while another poet sprang out from a grocer's shop clapping his hands, and crying 'Bravely done! by Beelzebub, the young 'cock spurs the blind buzzard gallantly!' On some neighbour representing to Mr. George the respectable character of Mr. Milton, and the probability that at some future time he might be considered as among our geniuses, and such as would reflect a certain portion of credit on his ward, and asking him withal why he appeared to him a rogue and a liar, he replied, 'I have 'proofs known to few: I possess a sort of drama by him, en-'titled *Comus*, which was composed for the entertainment of 'Lord Pembroke, who held an appointment under the king, 'and this John hath since changed sides, and written in defence 'of the Commonwealth.'"

This reference to the Wat Tyler raid was not to be mistaken; but what followed on the after-career of Mr. George struck harder still.

"Afterward, whenever he wrote a bad poem, he supported his sinking fame by some signal act of profligacy; an elegy by a seduction, a heroic by an adultery, a tragedy by a divorce. On the remark of a learned man that irregularity is no indication of genius, he began to lose ground rapidly, when on a sudden he cried out at the Haymarket, *There is no God.* It was then surmised more generally and more gravely that there was something in him, and he stood upon his legs almost to the last. Say what you will, once whispered a friend of mine, there are things in him strong as poison, and original as sin."

One would give one's little finger to have said that, exclaimed Julius Hare; Cribb himself never put in such a blow. Towards the close, too, another such hits home, where the bishop hopes for Mr. George, now no longer among the living, that the mercies which had been

begun with man's forgetfulness would be crowned with God's forgiveness. To which a compliment from Mr. Hardcastle on the worth that even writers of perishable fame may assume when represented by such a pen as the bishop's (a light one becoming as a film in agate, and a noxious one as a toad in marble), draws from Burnet a remark on the fallacy of human judgments which closes with noble appropriateness this fine conversation.

"How near together, Mr. Hardcastle, are things which appear to us the most remote and opposite! how near is death to life, and vanity to glory! How deceived are we, if our expressions are any proofs of it, in what we might deem the very matters most subject to our senses! the haze above our heads we call the heavens, and the thinnest of the air the firmament."

Of the sequel something will be told hereafter, in one of the letters to Southey. Hardly had the dialogue been printed when Byron's gallant exertions for the Greeks, followed by his death, turned Landor's anger into sorrow, and he was eager to make what amends he could. But, "alas, my writings are not upon slate: no finger, "not of Time himself, who dips it in the clouds of "years and in the storm and tempest, can efface the "written." Leaving it therefore, he placed beneath it in his second edition a generous tribute to the better parts of a character of which, in the conversation, he had depicted only the worst.

The speakers in the twelfth dialogue were the famous Austrian grand-duke Peter Leopold and the French president Du Paty whom he has summoned to confer upon the new code he is preparing for Tuscany, and with whom he discusses the laws of various nations, such defects in them as call for amendment, and such social or national peculiarities as they have risen from,

or by sympathy become part of. England is not spared any more than France or Italy; but in the latter it is shown that bad laws had grown out of what was worst in the surrounding social and religious influences, while in the former they have sprung up in the teeth of what is best in both society and religion. "Wherever," says Du Paty of the Italian, "there is a substitute for mor-
" ality, where ceremonies stand in the place of duties,
" where the confession of a fault before a priest is more
" meritorious than never to have committed it, where
" virtues and duties are vicarious, where crimes can be
" expiated after death for money, where by breaking
" a wafer you open the gates of Heaven,—probity and
" honour, if they exist at all, exist in the tempera-
" ment of the individual." Nor is he more merciful to his countrymen. "We French are the most delicate
" people in the world on points of honour, and the least
" delicate on points of justice." In other words, puts in Leopold, the most on imaginary things, the least on real. "A man's vanity tells him what is honour, a man's
" conscience what is justice: the one is busy and im-
" portunate in all times and places; the other but
" touches the sleeve when men are alone, and, if they
" do not mind it, leaves them. *Point* of honour you
" may well call it; for such precisely is the space it
" occupies." As to the English however, prince and president are in less perfect agreement: and there is an amusing comparison of the grand-duke's between the manners of English ladies abroad, "taking alarm or
" umbrage at every foot that approaches them," and the more winning ways of his Florentines; which calls forth by way of rejoinder from the president a picture, not it may be hoped too flattering, of the well-born Englishwoman at home, not only superintending the

village-school, hearing the children their lesson, examining their cleanliness, observing their dress, inquiring into their health, remarking their conduct, presaging their propensities, amused at their games, and interested in their adventures, but also visiting the sick, conversing with the aged, comforting the afflicted, and carrying her sons and daughters with her to acquire the practice of their duties. "If," he adds, after admission that even such women travelling too often leave these qualities behind them, "we desire to know with "certainty what religion is best, let us examine in what "country are the best fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, "wives: we shall there also find the best citizens, and "of course the best Christians." Here the speakers are again in agreement; and, in what is said by both of the degrading influences upon morals and laws of confession, celibacy, purgatory, and all the noxious brood of saints, miracles, intercessory prayers, prohibitions, and indulgences that are the stock-in-trade of Rome, we have the results of long and masterly observation of actual life in Italy. Allowance will be made here and there for statements verging on the extreme. Du Paty has even a theory that Cervantes, by his immortal romance, meant to laugh something more than knight-errantry away; and Leopold, resolved upon curtailing in his dominions the holidays of the Church, declares his belief that every saint in the calendar had made (not counting monks) ten thousand beggars and ten thousand thieves.

It should be added that a hint for more effectually dealing with both beggars and thieves was thrown out in this dialogue, written while yet poor-laws and prisons were unreformed, and reformatories hardly known; and throughout it ran a keen criticism of defects of English

laws only partly remedied since; their illusory, dilatory, and costly procedures; their punishments for bringing a man into contempt, "as if anyone could be brought "into it without stirring a step on his own legs toward "it;" and all the wrongs inseparable from their excessive use of halters and of fines. How the uses of a language, too, may exhibit differences or distinctions of character, is another truth shown in it by many examples from the Italian; and with a few of these that also illustrate the unfavourable impression thus far made upon the writer by the peculiarities of the people he had cast his lot among, I quit the dialogue.

"Of all pursuits and occupations, for I am unwilling to call it knowledge, the most trifling is denominated *virtù*. An alteration in a picture is *pentimento*. The Romans, detained from war and activity by a calm, termed it *malacia:* the Italians, whom it keeps out of danger, call it *bonaccia*. Three or four acres of land with a labourer's cottage are called a *podere*. Beggarly magnificence of expression! Every house with a barn-door instead of a narrower is *palazzo*. I saw open in a bookseller's window a boy's dictionary, *Dictionarium Ciceronianum*, in the page where *heros* was, and found its interpretation *barone*, *signore*. Strength which frightens, and finery which attracts them, are *honesty:* hence *valentuomo* and *galantuomo*. A well-dressed man is a man of honour, *uomo di garbo*. *Spogliare* is *to undress;* the spoils of a modern Italian being his shirt and stockings."

These are given by Du Paty. But Leopold contributes one from his own profession.

"*Governare* means to *govern* and to *wash the dishes*. This indeed is not so absurd at bottom; for there is generally as much dirty work in the one as in the other."

All, however, are not unfavourable; and our last may be an example of a pleasanter kind.

"We may discern, I think, the characters of nations in their different modes of salutation. We Italians reply *Sto bene:* the

ancient Romans *valeo:* the Englishman, I am *well:* the Frenchman, *I carry myself well.* Here the Italian, the best-formed of Europeans, stands with gracefulness and firmness, in short, *stands well:* the Roman, proudly confident in his strength, says, *I am stout and hearty:* the Englishman feels throughout mind and body this 'standing well,' this calm confident vigour, and says, I *am* well: the Frenchman *carries himself* so."

In the thirteenth conversation Demosthenes and Eubulides appeared on the scene, the orator defending himself to his old teacher of Miletus against adversaries alike of his politics and eloquence, and in his turn carrying war into the territory of his assailants. The main object seems to be that Demosthenes should relate the discipline and experiences by which the varieties of his method, his alleged irregularities of speech, and the character of his oral delivery were determined; bringing under review many leading sophists, philosophers, and historians; and showing his right, in speaking to the people, to use their idiom, even at the risk of being called inattentive or indifferent to nobility of expression. "Ought I to speak nobly, as you call it, of base mat-" ters and base men? Ought my pauses to be invari-" ably the same? Would Aristoteles wish that a coat " of mail should be as flowing as his gown? Let peace " be perfect peace, war decisive war; but let eloquence " move upon earth with all the facilities of change that " belong to the Gods themselves." The conversation closes with what is too evidently a whimsical sketch of Canning under the cover of the last favourite orator of the Athenians, Anædestatus.

The fourteenth dialogue, between Bonaparte and the President of the Senate, was a laugh at the extravagant servility of the speeches addressed to the French emperor by his officers of state; and that it was not ineffective may be inferred from Hazlitt's calling it, in his

intense Bonapartism, a scandal against good taste and decency. To this conversation in its original form was appended a long and most remarkable note, of which in the collected edition portions were absorbed into other dialogues, upon the character of Bonaparte and some passages in his career; containing among other things a description of the retreat from Moscow, as fine as anything in the ancient historians. The view he took of Napoleon on this and on other occasions was, that he had the fewest virtues and the faintest semblances of them of any man that had risen by his own efforts to supreme power; yet that the services he rendered to society, incommensurate as they were with the prodigious means he possessed, were great, manifold, and extensive. He singles out, as the best kings of Napoleon's creation, Bernadotte and Louis Bonaparte, saying of the latter that from the throne he had mounted amid the curses of the people he descended amid their tears, and of both that they had given no sign, either by violence or rapacity, by insolence or falsehood, that they had been nurtured in the feverish bosom of the French Republic.

In the fifteenth conversation Landor reappeared in his own person in friendly talk with the Abbé Delille,* and the main part of it was an attack on Boileau, which one would like to have been made less dogmatically, and with less confidence in his knowledge of the delicacies of a living language not his own. But we may well afford to leave such exquisite sense and satire as Boileau's to turn with its smile the edge of a sharper assailant, and the digressions of the dialogue are masterly. As capital things are said in it as anywhere in the series, on points and peculiarities of style, and on individual authors, modern and ancient: as where

* See ante, i. 167-8.

the language of Gibbon in the *Decline and Fall* is likened to the colours of the setting sun; where the fact that there is no golden mean, no safe mediocrity, in poetry, is expressed in the remark that between the good and the excellent there is a greater difference than between the bad and the good; where Homer and Virgil are said to have been excelled in sublimity by Shakespeare and Milton, as the Caucasus and Atlas of the old world by the Andes and Teneriffe of the new; and where Voltaire, in his censures of those two famous Englishmen, is described sticking to them as a woodpecker to an old forest-tree only that he may pick out what is rotten, making the holes deeper than he found them, and after all his cries and chatter bringing home but scanty sustenance to his starveling nest. The good Abbé finds it difficult nevertheless to approve in Shakespeare of such frightful irregularities in the matter of unities and time as if a child might grow into a man in the course of a night, or as if we could see years of history act themselves in a day. But that is exactly what we do see in his English chronicles, Landor retorts. "And indeed the histories of our country read by "Shakespeare held human life within them. When "we are interested in the boy we spring forward to "the man, with more than a poet's velocity. We "would interrogate the oracles; we would measure the "thread around the distaff of the Fates; yet we quar-"rel with him who knows and tells us all. Glory to "thee in the highest, thou confidant of our Creator! "who alone hast taught us in every particle of the "mind how wonderfully and fearfully we are made." It may be added that this dialogue contains the substance of a talk Landor used often to mention having had with Talma (to whom John Kemble introduced him),

when, with a curious freedom from national predilections, the French tragedian declared our English blank verse to have a great superiority over the rhymed tragedy of the French stage; which imposed upon the actor, he said, the necessity of so breaking the joints and claws of every verse as to be able to pronounce it as if it were no verse at all, "thus undoing what the "poet had taken the greater part of his pains to ac- "complish."

The sixteenth dialogue introduced the Emperor Alexander discussing with Capo d'Istrias the results and prospects of the holy alliance, and apology was made in a note for attributing to both speakers more wisdom and reflection than either possessed. Certainly to such a writer as Landor one can see that the difficulty was infinitely less to show that the great are great than to show that the little are little; and it is only a truism to add that he is most successful where the most is demanded of him. But such passages of the dialogue before us as relate to the struggle of the Greeks and foreshadow its results, as the comparisons of national character in France and England, and as the prediction that no "runic spell would be ever so powerful as "the three words *Italy is free*," render it worthy of preservation; and there is a remark of Capo's about the continental armies which the events of the year following its publication verified, and which is pregnant still with important meaning. "Pertinacity among "rulers in making armies the instruments of their "ambition has made them the arbiters of their fate. "Soldiers can never stand idle long together: they "must turn into citizens or rebels."

Briefly I will add of the next succeeding dialogue, the seventeenth, between Kosciusko and Poniatowski,

that this also contained many admirable things; on the folly of the partition of Poland as even greater than its wickedness, on the small wisdom of the Poles in serving Napoleon with any expectation of service in return, and on the short-sightedness of politicians in leaving morals so much behind them. "Beyond all doubt," says Kosciusko, "I am a feeble and visionary politician: "nevertheless I will venture to express my opinion that "gratitude, although it never has been admitted among "the political virtues, is one; that whatever is good in "morals is also good in politics; and that, by intro- "ducing it opportunely and dexterously, the gravest of "old politicians might occasionally be disconcerted." The closing speech of this dialogue Julius Hare used to point to as a specimen of perfect rhythm, such as might have been deemed scarcely attainable in a language rather of thought than of sound such as ours is. But the great performer can make his instrument well nigh what he pleases.

The eighteenth conversation, between Middleton and Magliabechi, closed the first volume; and here occurred the passages whereon contention arose between Landor and his publisher, and which were omitted in the first edition by Julius Hare. They had relation to the efficacy of prayer: but if expurgation were to be made at all, it is difficult to understand the justice of leaving in the dialogue its other reasonings and humorous illustrations directed against doctrines and practices exclusively Romish. Even Southey could see that such omissions were not exactly fair, and he declined to be a party to them. The conversation is unquestionably a powerful one, but the effect would have been greater with less offence in the tone, and there are some words spoken by Magliabechi that seem to have this

objection in view. "I defended you to my superiors," he says to Middleton, "by remarking that Cicero had "asserted things incredible to himself merely for the "sake of argument, and had probably written them "before he had fixed in his mind the personages to "whom they should be attributed in his dialogues; "that, in short, they were brought forward for no other "purpose than discussion and explosion." In this was also let drop the secret of an occasional want of verisimilitude as chargeable to Landor as to Cicero.

## V. What the Second Volume contained.

The second volume opened with a dialogue, nineteenth in the series, between Milton and Marvel, who talk of what we should hardly expect to have been their theme, but find to be quietly characteristic both of them and of the time. Government, religion, the noblest forms of human life, the highest regions of poetry,—of these Milton talked in his happier days, and his thoughts about them all, scattered over his own majestic pages, are grandly familiar to us: but here, within sound of the riot of Bacchus and his revellers, we learn what may have been his thoughts about some wiser kinds of mirth, in what he says upon the literature of comedy. His friend Andrew has in hand the design of writing one, and this raises between them interchange of thought and suggestion not only as to its forms but its province, and its principal masters among the ancient writers. Upon the points of management and plot we have a reproduction of what had been said so ingeniously by Mr. Hardcastle in his preface to the comedy of the *Cha-*

*ritable Dowager*:* and in the higher criticism we have sayings happily suggestive of Menander, whose fragments Marvel imitates in some verses; of Plautus, who for his clear insight into feeling and manners is declared by Milton to resemble Shakespeare more than any of the ancients; and of Aristophanes, to whom the praise and blame are given that would naturally arise to the lips of so severe a moralist and so great a poet. While he compares his verse to a dance of bacchanals, and admits that in his joyous glades the satyrs do not dance without the nymphs, he yet brands him with the offence beyond pardon of turning into derision what is excellent, and endeavouring to render undesirable what ought to be desired. The character and writings of the wise, Milton holds to be the only riches our posterity cannot squander; and he would punish the man who attempts to depreciate them. I will add his noble exhortation to Marvel to be ever mindful of what learning gives, and heedless of what she takes away.

"O Andrew! albeit our learning raiseth up against us many enemies among the low, and more among the powerful, yet doth it invest us with grand and glorious privileges, and confer on us a largeness of beatitude. We enter our studies and enjoy a society which we alone can bring together: we raise no jealousy by conversing with one in preference to another: we give no offence to the most illustrious by questioning him as long as we will, and leaving him as abruptly. Diversity of opinion raises no tumult in our presence: each interlocutor stands before us, speaks or is silent, and we adjourn or decide the business at our leisure. Nothing is past which we desire to be present: and we enjoy by anticipation somewhat like the power which I imagine we shall possess hereafter, of sailing on a wish from world to world."

The speakers in the twentieth dialogue were Washington and Franklin, who are supposed to have met

* See vol. i. pp. 389-90.

on the envoy's return from Paris, and between whom are exchanged experiences and thoughts that would be likely to occur at such a time: recollections of the recent struggle; comparisons of forms of government and religion; confidence in the prospects of the new world which they have created, and distrust of such arrangements of the old world as their success has left undisturbed. Washington points to where, by timely acknowledgment of error, England might "recover not "much less than she has lost;" and thereupon are suggested certain remedies for Ireland, of which the principal four have claim upon attention even yet. They proceed in chief from Franklin, who would have middlemen abolished to check absenteeism, Irish gentlemen ennobled to encourage residence, the Protestant Establishment removed to arrest popery, and fisheries established to relieve the potato. The shrewd man of type professes no confidence in talking men; thinks that no kind of good can come from keeping the understanding at tongue's-length; and is disposed to lay no small part of England's losses on her too great reliance upon orators. "I have been present while some of them "have thrown up the most chaffy stuff two hours to-"gether, and have never called for a glass of water. "This is thought the summit of ability; and he who is "deemed capable of performing it is deemed capable of "ruling the east and west." That was levelled against Pitt, and will be found to have considerable meaning in it to this day.

The series had no conversation more attractive than the twenty-first for the quiet sweetness of its tone and character. Lady Jane Grey, called suddenly away from the companionship of her books to that other in which her life was wrecked, takes counsel from her tutor,

Roger Ascham, on the duties awaiting her. Shaken by fears, the good old man strives hard to reassure himself. "Love is a secondary passion in those who " love most, a primary in those who love least. He who " is inspired by it in a high degree is inspired by hon- " our in a higher." With innocent dismay she hears his sentence of banishment from her old silent friends; and, surrendering to him those that have amused her in the arbour or the gravel-walk, makes tender intercession to retain still the companionship, by her fireside and her pillow, of the four that have taught her truth and eloquence, courage and constancy. They are Cicero and Epictetus, Polybius and Plutarch. "Read them," cries Ascham; "read them on thy marriage-bed, on thy " child-bed, on thy death-bed. Thou spotless, undroop- " ing lily, they have fenced thee right well. These are " the men for men; these are to fashion the bright and " blessed creatures whom God one day shall smile upon " in thy chaste bosom. Mind thou thy husband." O, yes, she says; she will love and will obey him, and will do her best to make his home dear to him, reading to him every evening, and opening to him new worlds richer than those discovered by the Spaniard. Nay, says Ascham,

"Rather do thou talk with him, ride with him, play with him, be his faery, his page, his everything that love and poetry have invented: but watch him well; sport with his fancies; turn them about like the ringlets round his cheek; and if ever he meditate on power, go toss up thy baby to his brow, and bring back his thoughts into his heart by the music of thy discourse. Teach him to live unto God and unto thee; and he will discover that women, like the plants in woods, derive their softness and tenderness from the shade."

This dialogue was a great favourite with Hazlitt, whose praise of it rises to enthusiasm.

The twenty-second was between Francis Bacon and Richard Hooker: the fallen chancellor seeking consolation from religion in his trouble, and giving back to master Hooker the worth of yet more than he receives. There is much character in this little dialogue, and the style of each speaker is nicely shadowed forth. One may see it where Bacon compliments Hooker: "Good "master Hooker, I have read many of your reason- "ings, and they are admirably well sustained: added "to which, your genius has given such a strong cur- "rent to your language as can come only from a "mighty elevation and a most abundant plenteous- "ness:" and where Hooker, in his proud humility, contrasts what little he himself knows with the vast attainments of his most noble lord: "Wisdom con- "sisteth not in knowing many things, nor even in "knowing them thoroughly; but in choosing and in "following what conduces the most certainly to our "lasting happiness and true glory."

To a quite other world we pass in the twenty-third of the series, where a Spanish republican, General Lascy, and a treacherous priest and partisan of Ferdinand, the cura Merino, talk of what ought to be the rule in Spain, of the doings of the holy alliance, of the vices of modern governments in regard to countries foreign to their own, of the degradation and decline of the higher elements of freedom in England, and of the opportunity she had lost of placing herself at the head of the world. From the mouth of a contemptuous Spanish soldier, not inappropriately, we have language as to our houses of lords and commons which we may either for its wisdom gratefully accept, or for its want of better information charitably forgive; but, in whatever temper the conversation is read, there is in its shrewd suggestions matter for

profitable thought, and, by the side of much that may lower the confidence of Englishmen, enough also to justify and exalt their pride.

"The strength of England lies not in armaments and invasions: it lies in the omnipresence of her industry, and in the vivifying energies of her high civilisation. There are provinces she can not grasp: there are islands she can not hold fast; but there is neither island nor province, there is neither kingdom nor continent, which she could not draw to her side and fix there everlastingly, by saying the magic words Be Free. Every land wherein she favours the sentiments of freedom, every land wherein she but forbids them to be stifled, is her own; a true ally, a willing tributary, an inseparable friend. Principles hold those together whom power would only alienate."

Back to the antique world and its serener thoughts we are taken in the twenty-fourth conversation, where Sophocles has been summoned to the side of Pericles to congratulate him on the completion of the Piræus and the Pœcile, and where the great ruler and great writer of Athens, proud of the completeness of that glory of their city which has its foundation in the supremacy of its citizens, converse of the mighty power given to its statuaries and painters to restore to the living their dead ancestors and hand down themselves to their children in remotest times. The thought rises thereupon to Pericles of how worthless an incumbrance, how wearisome an impediment, life itself may be. "We are little "by being seen among men; because that phasis of "us only is visible which is exposed toward them and "which most resembles them: we become greater by "leaving the world, as the sun appears to be on de-"scending below the horizon. Strange reflection! hu-"miliating truth! that nothing on earth, no exertion, "no endowment, can do so much for us as a distant "day." The subject is afterwards pursued by Sopho-

cles in a form designed to suggest higher consolations. "It is folly to say, Death levels the whole human race; "for it is only when he hath stripped men of every- "thing external that their deformities can be clearly "discovered or their worth correctly ascertained. Gra- "titude is soon silent; a little while longer and Ingra- "titude is tired, is satisfied, is exhausted, or sleeps. . . "We then see before us and contemplate calmly the "creator of our customs, the ruler of our passions, the "arbiter of our pleasures, and, under the Gods, the "disposer of our destiny. What then, I pray you, is "there dead?" This is one of the grandest of the minor dialogues for the depth and reach of its reflection, to which there is but one interruption, where in Chloros, sold as a slave in Persia to a man who dealt largely in that traffic, one of Pitt's friends is discernible, and we discover Pitt himself as the slave-dealer who had displayed to the public four remarkable proofs of ability: first, by swallowing at a draught an amphora of the strongest wine; secondly, by standing up erect and modulating his voice like a sober man when he was drunk; thirdly, by acting to perfection like a drunken man when he was sober; "and fourthly, by a most sur- "prising trick indeed, which it is reported he learnt in "Babylonia: one would have sworn he had a blazing "fire in his mouth; take it out, and it is nothing but a "lump of ice."

For the successor to this dialogue, and wonderfully contrasting with it, brief mention may suffice. In this, the twenty-fifth of the series, Louis the Fourteenth is introduced with his confessor Father la Chaise, the object of it being that the speakers should unconsciously illustrate the inseparable alliance of superstition and cruelty, and satirise the ferocious religious wars of the

most Christian king. It is a grim kind of humour; but the effect desired is obtained, at the further expense of a laugh at the confessional.

The twenty-sixth conversation was between Tooke and Johnson, and was so enlarged after its first publication as to become in the collected edition two dialogues. It was upon the English language, the corruptions that have crept into it, and the restorations necessary to its correctness both in writing and speech. All his life this subject interested Landor. From early youth to extreme old age it was his hobby to be always putting forth such spellings of words as he professed to be able to vindicate from old writers; and reclaiming to the service of the language what he alleged to have been improperly rejected as obsolete. Nevertheless it may not be said that he has gone any great way towards the settlement of a subject of unquestionable importance. He was not enough of a philologist to make always the needful distinction between what is legitimately an old English word, and what is merely a form illegitimately given to it by changing fashions of scrivener or printer. He is full of suggestions that are subtle and ingenious; many of his reasonings are unanswerable; by these he has done much, by the example of his own writing infinitely more, to enrich the language, whose purity he jealously guarded and to whose dignity he largely added: but admirable as are many of the changes he insists upon, we fail to discover that he is governed, in any, by a very intelligible or uniform principle of change.

I may illustrate briefly a few of what must be called his inconsistencies. He would remove from one word, for example, all the marks of its origin; and then, with or without reason, would as sedulously retain them in

another. He would write clame, exclame, proclame, because of the Latin derivation; and he would spell soup soop and group groop, to remove the mark of their French derivation. On the other hand, again, to retain such trace, he would write parlement for parliament, manteau-maker for mantua-maker, would strike the i out of all such words as conceive, receive, perceive, achieve, and would spell allegiance, for its derivation after liege not allege, alliegeance. He makes many appeals from the vulgar (in the sense of common) to the learned, in determining what to speak or how to spell; but he has yet also the wisdom to know that few expressions can become vulgarisms without having a broad foundation, and that to have changed the scholarly gown for the homely jerkin is not always the worst that can befall a word. Upon this indeed is based one of the happiest things said in the dialogue, that whereas the language of the vulgar has the advantage of taking its source in known, comprehended, and operative things, the language of those immediately above them, flowing as it does in general from what is less clearly comprehended, is as a rule less pure. "Hence the profusion of broken and ill-" assorted metaphors which we find in the conversa-" tion of almost all who stand in the intermediate space " between the lettered and the lowest;" and of which curious examples are given. In what way, at the same time, a vulgarism may become the property of the best writers, he shows by example among others of a word, " underneath," of which either half conveys the full meaning of the whole; but which is significant though redundant, and was inscribed on the gravestones of peasants long before it shone amid heraldic emblems in the golden epitaphs of Jonson. Very properly he

thinks it silly to argue that we gain ground by shortening on all occasions the syllables of a sentence. "Half "a minute, if indeed so much is requisite, is well spent "in clearness, in fulness, and pleasureableness of ex- "pression, and in engaging the ear to carry a message "to the understanding." Yet this is forgotten when he would have us, on Addison's authority, substitute "grandor," the same in sound as its adjective comparative, for "grandeur;" which he maintains to be as bad as if we retained liqueur, honneur, faveur, and other "puny offspring of the projected jaw."

The real truth however is that these inconsistencies in the endeavour to be consistent, only help to show that, even if attainable, consistency would hardly be desirable. Doubtless there is something to be said for making wholly our own what we have fairly won, by putting under English laws our captives from the French and other tongues; but there must still be exceptions, and, as to trifles in spelling, one would hardly disturb customs long established for a uniformity after all not arrived at. We must admit it to be not reasonable to naturalise some words and leave others out in the cold; that it is not consistent to get rid of French terminations in quiver, monster, letter, pentameter, &c, and not to write also meter, scepter, sepulcher, luster, theater, &c; and that it is indefensible to write travesty and gaiety while yet we retain reverie, or to write lie and not retain applie, relie, allie; to write precede and not procede, accede and not succede; to write said and paid, and not praid and staid; or laid and not allaid, knowledge and not colledge, abridge and not alledge; but it is to be feared that there is really no help for these irrationalities. Still, not a small service is done by remarking them; and for students of language the dialogues of

Tooke and Johnson will be always a rich collection of such peculiarities and defects as a rare mastery of English, and prolonged and unwearying investigation of its irregularities and intricacies, could alone have brought together. In other ways also they are characteristic of Landor, as a few more examples of his reformed spellings will perhaps amusingly illustrate.

Appealing to better authors in wiser ages he would write with them finde, minde, kinde, blinde, holding the retention of the e to be as necessary to pronunciation as its elision would be fatal in chaste, waste, or paste, and that to say tim for time would not be worse than mind for minde. Not seeing why we should make three syllables of creator and two of creature, he would write creture. The adverb still, to avoid confusion between adverb and adjective, he would write stil; and for uniformity he would write both til and until. He cannot see why won should be the preterite of win, while begun is the preterite of begin. He thinks that, writing being the sign of speech, pronunciation should determine the spelling of such words as referr, inferr, interr, compell, dispell, and so forth, all of which should end with the double consonant. He condemns all such words as resistless, relentless, exhaustless, upon the ground that no word can legitimately end with 'less' that is not formed from a substantive; and, pointing out that a word so formed, as moneyless, peerless, penniless, thoughtless, careless, is necessarily not capable of a comparative or superlative, he discards as unhappy and inelegant all such phrases as a more or most careless, a more or most thoughtless, or a more or most peerless person. Since we write architecture and sculpture, he would write also painture, as in one instance Dryden does; and if Cowley's "pindarique" is to be laughed at, he

does not see why antique and picturesque should not be equally reducible to order. As we say treacherous and ponderous he would say monsterous and wonderous, to which he would assimilate enterance and remembrance. He sees as little reason for poulterer as for masterer, maltsterer, or ministerer. He would turn the adjective, circumspect, into a substantive like prospect and retrospect, adding the same termination for the adjective as in the latter words, circumspective, prospective, retrospective. He declares passenger or messenger to be as coarse and barbarous a substitute for passager or messager as sausinge for sausage. He would have rough, tough, sough, guided by bluff, rebuff, luff. He would omit the u wherever it is not sounded, as in favour, honour, and all that family; treating in the same way other not sounded letters, as the b in debt, crumb, and comb, and the s in island, puisne, demesne. He would avoid in every possible case the diphthong and reduplication of vowel, preferring, to the ordinary coat, green, sheaf, &c, cote, grene, shefe, kene, gote, dore, flore, for which and many of the like he pleads Chaucer's authority, as for worke in place of work. After ostrich he would write partrich, and he would assimilate anarchical and monarchical to the simpler patriarchal. He sees no better reason for apostle than for symble, and would, for agreement with their kinsfolk epistolary and apostolical, write apostol and epistol. Like Milton, he would write sovran and foren, both pronunciation and etymology declaring themselves against sovereign and foreign. As civil forms civility, he holds that abil should form ability; and generally as to all that class of words he would substitute il for le, as humbil, dazzil, tickil, &c. He would always write preterites and participles with t, as possest, disperst, extinguisht, refresht, nourisht, stopt, knockt,

dreamt, burnt, usurpt, talkt, remarkt, lavisht, askt, mockt; defying any human voice even to utter such words as cork'd. He objects to all such inversions of active and passive as well-read, well-spoken, well-mounted; and inasmuch as lead has led for its preterite, he thinks read should have red, without the de that Byron and others added to it, for that nobody could mistake the verb for the adjective.

Reasoning thus in that particular instance, however, he is quite as ready in others to reject existing forms because they involve confusion between words identical in spelling but different in meaning; and in fact it is to be repeated, ingenious and excellent as many of his suggestions are, that in adopting, for his only guide to such an extensive change as he desires in the forms of our language, the assumption that spelling should always agree with sound unless a higher authority should interpose, and that this higher authority is to be found sometimes in the old writers, sometimes in specialties of derivation, sometimes in the mere avoidance of anomalies and singularities, he would, if able to obtain any considerable following, make only worse-confounded such confusion as exists. Uniformity is impossible, and would hardly be desirable, in a language derived from such an infinity of sources. You may restore a language as you clean a picture by rubbing away the richness and mellowness of time. Where we are pleased, improprieties pass unnoticed, and it is well that they should. But while I thus take exception to what formed so large a part of the labours of my old friend in this interesting field, there was another not inconsiderable part for which infinite thanks are due to him. His canons of style are always sound; throughout these dialogues, in remarks on masters of style and in

illustrative examples, they find valuable expression; and against false taste, incorrectness, and impurity of every kind, the language had ever in him an unwearied sentinel, during all his life on watch and guard. The last instance I remember was immediately before his final departure from England, when he had passed his eighty-first year, and, in a conversation between Alfieri and Metastasio published in *Fraser's Magazine*, had singled out for scornful denunciation the fashionable and thrice-detestable word *pluck*,* an example of the very worst kind of base corruption of language. "That utterance " of Landor," Mr. Carlyle wrote to me at the time, referring to this passage, "did my heart good. In- " deed, the first of those two imaginary conversations " is really as good as anything I ever saw from Landor. " Do you think the grand old Pagan wrote that piece " just now? The sound of it is like the ring of Roman " swords on the helmets of barbarians. An unsubdu- " able old Roman! Make my loyal respects to him the " first time you write." It was the same spirit that had animated the Tooke and Johnson, burning brightly to the last.

Different in form from the rest, the twenty-seventh dialogue is more correctly to be described as a narrative by Landor of his calling at the house of an Italian friend, Cavaliere Puntomichino, who had travelled in England; of his meeting there an Irish gentleman, Mr. Dennis Eusebius Talcranagh, who had lately published

* " You will suppose that by this expression he meant courage: he " did so. We Italians would have said spirit, or heart, which comes " nearest. But the meaning of *pluck*, until this year, had always " been the entrails of animals, torn out of them, and the vilest part " of them. The Romans were satisfied with *cor* and *pectus;* their " contents, *animo* and *coraggio*, suffice for us; but what is ejected " from a beast is to an Englishman the coronal of glory."

an imperial folio of eleven pages on the Wolf-dog of Erin; and of his taking part in a conversation that followed on Italian society and manners, and on British travellers and reviewers, which in regard to these various subjects was the reverse of complimentary. Each of the three speakers has his grievance. The Irishman has paid some fellow in Cockspur-street for a favourable criticism of his folio, and says he declined other civilities of that sort, although the proprietor of one of the journals, upon ascertaining that from ignorance of custom he was too proud to review it himself, had been constantly at the heels of his groom in the hope of getting *him* to review it. The Cavaliere points out the many social failings of his countrymen, and complains of the absence of public spirit. "His only grievances " are, to pay taxes for the support, and to carry arms " for the defence, of his country." And Landor himself, complimenting Miss Edgeworth, says bitter things of Lady Morgan, and remarking on his Florentine friend's description of the starved hospitality of the Italians, gives us one or two personal traits. "I have never been " tempted to dine from home these seven years: yet I " have given at least a hundred dinners in the time, if " not superb, at least not sordid. And those who knew " me long ago say 'Landor is become a miser: his fa- " ther did otherwise.'" As might have been expected, this conversation gave great offence in Florence.

The subject of the twenty-eighth conversation, between Hofer and Metternich, had been suggested by Southey,* and there is good character in it, as well as capital writing. The air of his mountains is not fresher than the talk for which the Tyrolese leader at the close craves pardon of the treacherous Austrian. "Excuse

* See ante, i. 379-80.

" me, sir, I acknowledge my error. I have been dis-
" coursing as if all the cloth in the world were of one
" colour and one fineness; and as if a man who goes
" upon two legs were equal to one who goes upon eight
" or sixteen, with a varnished plank betwixt, and an-
" other man's rear at his nostrils."

The twenty-ninth was between the kinsmen Hume and Home; the former talking much as his essays might suggest, and making many keen thrusts which the other parries feebly. But though doubts are rather started than solved in this dialogue, its matter is full of interest; there is a remark of Hume's in the course of it, that the evil principle, or devil, was hardly worth the expense of his voyage from Persia, to which some orthodox theologians seem lately to have given their assent; and other touches of wit and humour are in the ironical philosopher's happiest vein.

In the thirtieth Mavrocordato and Colocotroni discussed eloquently the affairs of Greece, bitterly denouncing the holy alliance; and here occurred the suggestion, put forth with the utmost gravity, for another trial of the bow and arrow as an instrument of war.

In the thirty-first was introduced one of Landor's greatest favourites, Alfieri, talking with the Florentine Jew, Salomon; and better talk it would not be easy to imagine. He had a wonderful liking for Alfieri,* in

* I might have mentioned on an earlier page that he once saw Alfieri, with whom I have often heard him say that his thoughts were in more frequent agreement than with those of any other writer. He used especially to quote him in his latter years for the remark, in which he expressed his own cordial concurrence, that Italy and England were the only two countries worth living in. I quote one of his letters: "The only time I ever saw Alfieri was just before he left this
" country for ever. I accompanied my Italian master, Parachinetti,
" to a bookseller's to order the works of Alfieri and Metastasio, and
" was enthusiastic, as most young men were, about the French Revo-

whose intolerant liberalism, aristocratic republicanism, and fierce independence, he had all the enjoyment of his own. Here was, in another, what others might see in himself; and the weakness of it never, but the strength of it always, impressed him. "As a writer and as a "man, I know my station. If I found in the world "five equal to myself, I would walk out of it, not to "be jostled." National contrasts in the English, French, and Italian; comparison of moderns with the ancients in regard to satirical writing; a discrimination of the gravity of wit and humour from the gaiety of banter and quibble; and a masterly definition and limitation of the right provinces of satire; are the principal points of this dialogue, which closes with a noble denial by the Florentine of the saying that climate is the creator of genius. Austria had a regular and temperate climate, and not a single man of genius had appeared in her whole vast extent; Florence was subject to heavy fogs for two months in winter, and to a stifling heat concentrated within the hills for five more, and her men of genius who could count up? "Look from the window. "That cottage on the declivity was Dante's. That "square and large mansion, with a circular garden be-"fore it elevated artificially, was the first scene of "Boccaccio's *Decameron*. A boy might stand at an "equal distance between them, and break the windows "of each with his sling. . . A town so little that the "voice of a cabbage-girl in the midst of it may be heard "at the extremities, reared within three centuries a

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"lution. 'Sir,' said Alfieri, 'you are a very young man. You are "yet to learn that nothing good ever came out of France, or ever "will. The ferocious monsters are about to devour one another; "and they can do nothing better. They have always been the curse "of Italy; yet we too have fools among us who trust them.'" 1852.

" greater number of citizens illustrious for their genius " than all the remainder of the continent (excepting " her sister Athens) in six thousand years. Smile as " you will, Signor Conte, what must I think of a city " where Michael Angelo, Frate Bartolomeo, Ghiberte " (who formed them), Guicciardini, and Macchiavelli, " were secondary men? And certainly such were they, " if we compare them with Galileo and Boccaccio and " Dante." It was not till nearly six years after writing this that Landor became himself the owner of a villa at Fiesole which was built by Michael Angelo, and could boast that the very spot in that immortal valley where Boccaccio had placed his Lago delle Belle Donne formed a portion of the grounds of his own farm and vineyard.

The bad faith of the greater to the lesser states of Europe was the theme of the thirty-second conversation; Lopez Baños and Alpuente being the speakers, and their principal subjects the conduct of France to Spain, the gallantry and self-denial of Mina and the patriots, and the atrocities of Ferdinand. Here, as in most part of the conversations merely political, the subjects have passed away, and the speakers' names have ceased to be words to conjure with; yet the charm of the composition is enduring, and in all of them sayings abound that will never lose their freshness. "Little is " that, O Lopez, which any man can give us; but that " which we can give ourselves is infinitely great. This " of all truths, when acted upon consistently, is the " most important to our happiness and glory." In the mouth of Alpuente is also placed a fine characterisation of his countrymen; where, speaking of the English and their favourite oak, he says that "the Spaniard has " rather the qualities of the cedar: patient of cold and

" heat, nourished on little, lofty and dark, unbending " and incorruptible."

The thirty-third dialogue, between Lord Chatham and Lord Chesterfield, was upon the principal English philosophers, Bacon, Hobbes, Newton, and Locke; Chatham taking occasion to make unsparing assault on Plato, and Chesterfield giving drily his assent that it *was* rather an idle thing for an old gentleman in a purple robe to be sticking pins in every chair on which a sophist was likely to sit down. We have here a difficult and complex subject treated too confidently; but the conversation is nevertheless one of the best. All the eulogy of Locke is admirable; the style throughout is wonderful for a clearness as of crystal; and there are incidental sayings of a singular beauty, as in what is remarked of Newton's famous comparison of himself to the boy gathering pebbles by the sea-shore with the ocean of truth lying all undiscovered before him. " Surely, Nature, " who had given him the volume of her greater mys- " teries to unseal, who had bent over him and taken his " hand, and taught him to decipher the characters of " her sacred language, who had lifted up her veil before " him higher than ever yet for mortal, that she might " impress her features and her fondness on his heart,— " threw it back wholly at these words, and gazed upon " him with as much admiration as ever he had gazed " with upon her." Often, as in the criticism of Plato, where assent is most reluctantly given, admiration is most strongly awakened; the handling of the objection to the poets in his Republic is full of masterly illustration; and the exception to be taken to the criticism altogether, is not so much that the particular objections are untenable, as that the general view is incomplete. If it could be proved to demonstration to-morrow that

Bacon's mind was prodigiously more vigorous and comprehensive than Plato's, that his philosophical acumen was sharper and more penetrating, and that his imagination was not only more creative, but cast from its altitude more definite and more proportioned shadows, the influence exercised by Plato, not on thinkers merely but on thought and on belief through successive ages, would remain unexplained, a thing solitary and apart, mysterious and unaccountable. Tradition is powerful and almost sacred, but will not satisfy us as to this.

The objection to Plato is resumed in the next following (the thirty-fourth) conversation, between Aristoteles and Callisthenes; which upon the whole I should be disposed to characterise as more interpenetrated than any other with intimate and accurate knowledge of the old Greek literature, character, and social life, although it contains also, under the flimsiest of disguises, a coarse attack on Metternich and Castlereagh! The period of time in this dialogue is when Callisthenes, having incurred the dislike of Alexander whom he had accompanied into Asia, has been sent back as the messenger of presents for Xenocrates; visits his old teacher and relative Aristoteles; and has such talk with him as might arise at such a time. Of the respective claims of philosophers and kings, of the superiority of republics over monarchies, of the debasing tendencies of despotism on the despot, and the inferiority of the sensual to the intellectual pleasures, they hold converse grave and noble. There is not a page that is not radiant with exalted thought. "The higher de-
" lights of the mind," says Aristotle, upon the wonder expressed by his pupil at his own and even Plato's youthfulness of look, "are in this, as in everything

" else, very different in their effects from its seduc-
" tive passions. These cease to gratify us the sooner,
" the earlier we indulge in them; on the contrary, the
" earlier we indulge in thought and reflection, the
" longer do they last, and the more faithfully do they
" serve us." And how different from those of the great king, rejoins Callisthenes, are your conquests and your friends; united not for robbery and revelry, but joyous in discovery, calm in meditation, intrepid in research.

"How often, and throughout how many ages, shall you be a refuge from such men as he and his accomplices: how often will the studious, the neglected, the deserted, fly towards you for compensation in the wrongs of fortune, and for solace in the rigour of destiny! His judgment-seat is covered by his sepulchre: after one year hence no appeals are made to him: after ten thousand there will be momentous questions, not of avarice or litigation, not of violence or fraud, but of reason and of science, brought before your judgment-seat, and settled by your decree. Dyers and tailors, carvers and gilders, grooms and trumpeters, make greater men than God makes; but God's last longer, throw them where you will."

Nor less admirable is the anticipation by Aristotle himself of what is told us in the homily of Chrysostom, that neither the tomb of Alexander nor the day of his death was known.

"I have lost an ibis, or perhaps a hippopotamus, by losing the favour of Alexander; he has lost an Aristoteles. He may deprive me of life: but in doing it he must deprive himself of all he has ever been contending for of glory; and even a more reasonable man than he will acknowledge that there is as much difference between life and glory as there is between an ash-flake from the brow of Ætna and the untameable and eternal fire within its centre. . . . I have prepared for myself a monument, Callisthenes, from which perhaps some atoms may be detached by time, but which will retain the testimonials of its magnificence and the traces of its symmetry when the substance and site of Alexander's shall be forgotten. Who knows but

that the very ant-hill whereon I stand may preserve its figure and contexture when the sepulchre of this Macedonian shall be the solitary shed of a robber, or the manger of mules and camels!"

Reluctant as I am to quit this dialogue, I will close with its exquisite little character of Phocion. "He con- "quered with few soldiers, and he convinced with few "words. I know not what better description I could "give you either of a great captain or great orator."

To the class of conversations like the Ascham and Lady Jane Grey and others to be named hereafter, prose-poems of faultless construction, made as "of one entire "and perfect chrysolite," and not to have any portion taken from them without impairment of their beauty, the thirty-seventh belonged. This was the Henry the Eighth and Anne Boleyn of which Hazlitt and Hare spoke with equal enthusiasm. The delicacy of the means by which its effect is produced appears to have impressed them both alike; and certainly the art is very admirable where such extraordinary pathos is so controlled and chastened, by the delight arising from the contemplation of its beauty, as to be neither painful nor overpowering. The sensual is as distant from it as the sentimental. "The angelic purity," said Hare, "the "innocence and kindliness, the affectionate simplicity "of the sufferer, elevate her far beyond the reach of "evil;" and he might have added, that the genius of the conception is in nothing more manifest than in showing, besides, that the very qualities that so lifted her far above guilt were those also that had betrayed her to the doubt and suspicion of it. Hare further observed it as a fine peculiarity of this dialogue that its language was throughout quite simple, and recommended it as a study for those who conceived poetry to consist

in imagery. One image there is nevertheless, where, driven to find excuse for her gaiety, Anne tells her lord that the withered leaf catches the sun sometimes, little as it can profit by it; but the extraordinary beauty of the composition beyond a doubt is its quiet plainness and even homeliness of speech. It would be difficult to imagine an effect more profoundly touching than that of her closing allusion to her daughter, when at last made fully conscious of the fate awaiting herself. "Love your Elizabeth, my honoured lord, and God "bless you! She will soon forget to call me: do not "chide her: think how young she is."

The last dialogue of the series was that of the Ciceros. The speakers were Marcus Tullius and Quinctus, and the greatest beauty and impressiveness distinguished it throughout. The brothers, who had taken opposite sides in the wars closed by the second triumvirate, meet at the house of Quinctus by the sea, on the evening before that anniversary of the birthday of Tullius which was also to be the day of his violent death. Sundered by civil strife so long, they have been drawn together now by the calamities of their country; hope subsided in both, and ambition silenced, the tenderness of earlier days has returned; and for the last time together, in friendly converse, they walk along the shore of Formiæ. The greatest champion of the republic contrasts, to her sorrowing assailant, the genius and the virtues fallen with her, and the rulers risen in their place; to rebuke the living Lepidus, Octavianus, and Antonius, he summons from their urns Cornelia and the Gracchi, Sertorius, Pompeius, Cato, Lucullus, Cæsar, and Brutus; the gloom and despair that surround him pass away, in the brightness of the hope that philosophy has opened beyond them; and, in language modelled after the choicest

of the treatises and orations that bear his name, he shows himself as ready cheerfully to part with life as he had been reluctant to bid farewell to liberty. This blending of a personal emotion with the antique life of Rome constitutes preëminently the attraction of this dialogue; which for the completeness of the identification of its ideal portraiture with historic truth has been frequently and perhaps justly characterised as the masterpiece of all the conversations. A competent critic has indeed declared that the sayings in it attributed to Cicero on subjects especially his own are such as might not only not have lessened but have added to his fame; and a story was told of Lord Dudley by Francis Hare, which Landor has more than once with pardonable pride repeated to me, that during one of his illnesses in Italy he had asked a friend to read aloud to him this dialogue, and, to his friend's admiring question at the close "whether it was not, by Jove, exactly what Cicero "would have said," had himself exclaimed, "*Yes, if* "*Cicero could have said it!*"

It would nevertheless be difficult, filled as it is with sayings Ciceronian, to exhibit their impressiveness by extracting even the best of them. The conversation is so infinitely better than anything that can be taken from it. It unfolds itself in such fine gradations as the brothers walk along the shore, their thoughts toned and tempered by skyey influences, and their spirits drawn nearer not more by conscious remembrance of the past than by that dim foreboding of some coming change, the forecast of a final quiet to which both are drawing near, which so often accompanies the approach of death. The very mildness of the winter evening, with a softness in its moist still air allied to the gentleness of sorrow, plays its part in the dialogue. As they re-

trace their steps, the purple light that had invested the cliffs and shore has faded off, and the night quite suddenly closes in; of the promontories, the long irregular breakers under them, the little solitary Circæan hill, the neighbouring whiter rocks of Anxur, the spot where the mother of the Gracchi lived, nothing further is discernible; all the nobleness of the surrounding or the far-off landscape, recalling scenes of friendship and recollections of greatness, has passed away; they see now but the darkness of the ignoble present, and as, on reaching home, they notice the servants lighting the lamps in the villa and making preparation for the birthday on the morrow, the thought at length consciously arises to Marcus whether that coming birthday, least pleasurable to him as it must be, may not also be his last. But no feeling of despondency or grief arises with it. All he has been saying to his brother has had for its design to assuage the anxieties and disquietudes attending the thought of death.

"Man thinks it miserable to be cut off in the midst of his projects: he should rather think it miserable to have formed them. For the one is his own action, the other is not; the one was subject from the beginning to disappointments and vexations, the other ends them. And what truly is that period of life in which we are not in the midst of our projects? They spring up only the more rank and wild, year after year, from their extinction or change of form, as herbage from the corruption and dying-down of herbage. . . Sleep, which the Epicureans and others have represented as the image of death, is, we know, the repairer of activity and strength. If they spoke reasonably and consistently, they might argue from their own principles, or at least take the illustration from their own fancy, that death, like sleep, may also restore our powers, and in proportion to its universality and absoluteness. . . . The memory of those great men who consolidated our republic by their wisdom, exalted it by their valour, and protected and defended it by their constancy, stands not alone nor idly: they draw us after them, they

place us with them. O Quinctus! I wish I could impart to you my firm persuasion, that after death we shall enter into their society; and what matter if the place of our reunion be not the Capitol or the Forum? . . . Surely he deserves the dignity and the worship of a God who first instructed men that by their own volition they may enjoy eternal happiness; that the road to it is most easy and most beautiful, such as any would follow by preference even if nothing desirable were at the end of it. Neither to give nor to take offence, are surely the two things most delightful in human life; and it is by these two things that eternal happiness may be attained. We shall enjoy a future state accordingly as we have employed our intellect and our affections. Perfect bliss can be expected by few; but fewer will be so miserable as they have been here."

They had only to carry with them such thoughts as these, and death need not trouble them further. It would but the sooner bring to them the happy day when they would again meet their equals, when their inferiors could harass them no more, and society would take the place of solitude. "For there only is the sense of soli-
" tude where everything we behold is unlike us. . . .
" Death has two aspects: dreary and sorrowful to those
" of prosperous, mild and almost genial to those of ad-
" verse fortune. Her countenance is old to the young,
" and youthful to the aged: to the former her voice
" is importunate, her gait terrific: the latter she ap-
" proaches like a bedside friend, and calls in a whisper
" that invites to rest. . . . Were it certain that the
" longer we live the wiser we become and the happier,
" then indeed a long life would be desirable; but since,
" on the contrary, our mental strength decays, and our
" enjoyments of every kind not only sink and cease but
" diseases and sorrows come in place of them, if any
" wish is rational, it is surely the wish that we should
" go away unshaken by years, undepressed by griefs,
" and undespoiled of our better faculties. Life and

" death appear more certainly ours than whatsoever " else: and yet hardly can that be called ours which " comes without our knowledge and goes without it; " or that which we cannot put aside if we would, and " indeed can anticipate but little. There are few who " can regulate life to any extent; none who can order " the things it shall receive or exclude. What value " then should be placed upon it by the prudent man, " when duty or necessity calls him away? . . . Every- " thing has its use; life to teach us the contempt of " death, and death the contempt of life. Glory, which " among all things between stands eminently the prin- " cipal, although it has been considered by some philo- " sophers as mere vanity and deception, moves those " great intellects which nothing else could have stirred, " and places them where they can best and most ad- " vantageously serve the commonwealth. Glory can " be safely despised by those only who have fairly won " it. . . . The philosopher who contemns it has every " rogue in his sect, and may reckon that it will outlive " all others. . . . Fame, they tell you, is air: but with- " out air there is no life for any; without fame there " is none for the best."

Such thoughts and speech were worthy to close a book of so great and so original a character. Possessing these two qualities to an extent that no general criticism could have adequately shown, and being of all Landor's future labours in literature the determining type and expression, an account of it sufficiently minute to save the necessity of recurring and repeated description hereafter seemed desirable at once. The thirty-eight dialogues thus first issued became in number, before Landor's death, not fewer than a hundred and fifty; but different as all these were in themselves, it was not the

less the distinguishing mark of their genius to be both in their conformation and in their mass almost strangely alike; and it is this unity in the astonishing variety, the fire of an irrepressible genius running through the whole, that gives to the book containing them its place among books not likely to pass away. I have put before the reader quite fairly what the earliest dialogues were; and as, down to the very last, if I continued my review, the same wealth of character, thought, and style would present itself for description and selection, little more may now suffice than to mention as they arise the subjects chosen and the names of the speakers. The intensity and the range of mental power displayed will thus also sufficiently declare themselves. There is scarcely a form or function of the human mind, serious or sprightly, cogitative or imaginative, historical, fanciful, or real, which has not been exercised or brought into play in this extraordinary series of writings. The world past and present is reproduced in them, with its variety and uniformity, its continuity and change. When the American writer Emerson had made the book his companion for more than twenty years, he publicly expressed to the writer his gratitude for having given him a resource that had never failed him in solitude. He had but to recur to its rich and ample page, wherein he was always sure to find free and sustained thought, a keen and precise understanding, an affluent and ready memory familiar with all chosen books, an industrious observation in every department of life, an experience to which it might seem that nothing had occurred in vain, honour for every just and generous sentiment, and a scourge like that of the Furies for every oppressor whether public or private, to feel how dignified was that perpetual Censor in his curule chair, and to wish to thank so great a

benefactor. "Mr. Landor," continues Emerson, "is one "of the foremost of that small class who make good in "the nineteenth century the claims of pure literature. "In these busy days of avarice and ambition, when there "is so little disposition to profound thought or to any "but the most superficial intellectual entertainment, a "faithful scholar, receiving from past ages the treasures "of wit, and enlarging them by his own love, is a friend "and consoler of mankind. . . . Whoever writes for "the love of truth and beauty and not with ulterior "ends belongs to a sacred class, among whom there are "few men of the present age who have a better claim "to be numbered than Mr. Landor. Wherever genius "or taste has existed, wherever freedom and justice, "which he values as the element in which genius may "work, are threatened, his interest is sure to be com- "manded. His love of beauty is passionate, and be- "trays itself in all petulant and contemptuous expres- "sions. But beyond his delight in genius and his love "of individual and civil liberty, Mr. Landor has a per- "ception that is much more rare—the appreciation of "character. This is the more remarkable considered "with his intense nationality, for he is buttoned in "English broadcloth to the chin. . . . Such merits "make Mr. Landor's position in the republic of letters "one of great mark and dignity. He exercises with a "grandeur of spirit the office of writer, and carries it "with an air of old and unquestionable nobility. His "acquaintance with the English tongue is unsurpassed. "He is a master of condensation and suppression, and "that in no vulgar way. He knows the wide difference "between compression and an obscure elliptical style. "Dense writer as he is, he has yet ample room and "choice of phrase, and often even a gamesome mood be-

" tween his valid words. There is no inadequacy or dis-
" agreeable contraction in one of his sentences, any more
" than in a human face, where in a square space of a
" few inches is found room for every possible variety of
" expression. . . . Of many of Mr. Landor's sentences
" we are fain to remember what was said of those of
" Socrates, that they are cubes, which will stand firm
" place them how or where you will." The author of this tribute gave also practical proof of the strength of the admiration that suggested it. The wish to see " the " faces of three or four writers" had been one of his principal motives for visiting Europe in 1833; and when fourteen years later he had crossed the Atlantic again, he told his countrymen, among other experiences of Europe, what his intercourse had been with those three or four writers whose faces he had so desired to see. Their names were Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, and Carlyle.

## VI. How the Book was received.

In February 1824 Southey sent to Landor the completed book, and in the letter accompanying it, alluding once more to the omissions made by himself and Hare, expressed his belief that wherever Landor perceived a passage to have been struck out he would perceive at the same time for what reason it had been omitted; the reason for every omission having been such that he was persuaded Landor would without hesitation have assented to it, had he been upon the spot. Of the book itself Southey spoke as, with the views then held by him, it might be supposed he would; with rapture of its genius, and with reserve of its opinions. A most powerful and original book he thought it; in any one page of which, almost in any single sentence, he should have discovered

the author, if it had come into his hands as an anonymous publication. "Notice it must needs attract; but "I suspect that it will be praised the most by those "with whom you have the least sympathy, and that the "English and Scotch liberals may perhaps forgive you "even for being my friend."

A few months later in the same year he bade Landor be of good heart, for a more striking book had never issued from the press "in these kingdoms," nor one more certain of surviving the wreck of its generation; and this not from the adventitious importance of the subject, but from the excellence of the workmanship. The last letter written in that year was also occupied with it, with the growth of public opinion about it, and with the talk it was making. Southey rejoiced to hear of a third volume; spoke of subjects which Landor, and he only, could treat as they ought to be treated; and urged him not to hesitate at sending over a fourth also. "The book is making you known, "as you ought to be; and it is one of those few books "which nothing can put aside." This letter, written at the opening of December 1824, had the additional interest for Landor of two supplementary pages in the handwriting of Wordsworth.

"I have begged this space from Southey," he wrote, "which I hope you will forgive, as I might not otherwise for some time have had courage to thank you "for your admirable dialogues. They reached me last "May, at a time when I was able to read them, which "I did with very great pleasure. I was in London "then, and have been a wanderer most of the time since. "But this did not keep me silent. I was deterred, "such is the general state of my eyes, by a consciousness that I could not write what I wished. I concur

" with you in so much, and differ with you in so much
" also, that though I could easily have disposed of my
" assent, easily and most pleasantly, I could not face
" the task of giving my reasons for my dissent! For
" instance, it would have required almost a pamphlet
" to set forth the grounds upon which I disagree with
" what you have put into the mouth of Franklin on
" *Irish* affairs, the object to my mind of constant anxiety.
" What would I not give for a few hours' talk with you
" upon republics, kings, and priests—and priestcraft!
" This last I abhor; but why spend one line in de-
" claiming against it? Better endeavour to improve
" priests, whom we cannot, and ought not therefore
" endeavour to, do without. We have far more to
" dread from those who would endeavour to expel not
" only organised religion but all religion from society,
" than from those who are slavishly disposed to uphold
" it. At least I cannot help feeling so. Your dialogues
" are worthy of you, and a great acquisition to litera-
" ture. The classical ones I like best, and most of all
" that between Tully and his brother. That which
" pleases me the least is the one between yourself
" and the Abbé Delille. The observations are inva-
" riably just, I own; but they are fitter for illustra-
" tive notes than the body of a dialogue, which ought
" always to have some little spice of dramatic effect.
" I long for the third volume; a feeling which after
" my silence I should not venture to express, were you
" not aware of the infirmity which has been the cause
" of it. I sent a message of thanks, from Cambridge,
" through Julius Hare, whom I saw at Cambridge in
" May last. Ever affectionately and gratefully yours,
" Wm. Wordsworth."

With well-founded pride Landor received this tri-

bute from two such famous men. "Your letter," he wrote on the 6th of January 1825, "with its closing "lines from Wordsworth, gave me incredible delight. "Never did two such hands pass over the same paper, "unless when Barrow was solving some problem set "before him by Newton." He had already, on the 4th of the previous November, acknowledged what Southey said on the eve of the publication. "I never ask what "is the public opinion of anything I write. God for- "bid it should be favourable; for more people think "injudiciously than judiciously. *Your* sentence has "elated me.

'De me splendida Minos
Fecerit arbitria.'

"It is irreversible."

What meanwhile had been the sentence generally upon the book, I shall perhaps be expected to say. There can be no doubt that it produced at once an impression which it falls to the lot of few books in a generation to make that have not amusement for their principal design. Such readers as it obtained were thoroughly aroused by it. Even where its opinions met with the least favour, its mark was most decisive. It was not a book that any cultivated reader could put aside as of indifferent account; and its power and originality were admitted in the strongest objections it provoked. On the one hand, without challenge it might be said that no book had appeared in that generation comparable to it for the variety of its claims: imagination, wit, and humour; dramatic insight, and play of character; richness of scholarship; correctness, conciseness, and purity of style; extent of information; speculative boldness; many-sided interest; and sympathies all but universal. On the other hand,

as unchallenged might the assertion be made that never had so masculine an intellect been weakened by so violent a temper, so many durable thoughts degraded by so many momentary humours, and such masterly discrimination of praise and blame made worthless by so many capricious enmities and unreasonable likings. I do not indeed find, in the criticisms published at the time, anything to my mind satisfactorily descriptive of the book, or any real subtlety of appreciation for either its strength or weakness; but this is fairly the tone that may be taken to express the differing verdicts of those who talked about it: and though no great circulation awaited it at the outset, it reached without difficulty the class of readers who most sensibly influence the general opinion in such things, and have always a great deal to do with the making or unmaking of books in the matter of immediate reputation. The entire result will better appear in the sequel. But at last Landor had won for himself a hearing; he contributed to the town talk for a whole season at least; at the universities, in particular, his name became a familiar word; and men who in those days were at Cambridge have declared that decidedly the literary sensation of 1824 was the *Imaginary Conversations*, and that the last poem of Byron, even in that year of his death, had not been more warmly discussed at the bachelors' tables or in the common-rooms.

Julius Hare had formed an exalted estimate of the book. He believed of it, and retained this belief to the end of his life, that it would live as long as English literature lived. Some of the conversations he thought unsurpassed by the masterpieces of poetic creation, ancient or modern; and by the style in all of them he was fascinated in the extreme. None other

so good was known to him in our language. There was hardly a dialogue which he did not think a model of what prose composition should be; and at its best, where the air of classic antiquity breathed about the speakers, the style seemed to him what Apollo's talk might have been, as radiant, piercing, and pure. But though he thus characterised as incomparable the manner of the book which he so largely had helped to bring into the world, to its sometimes questionable matter he was not insensible; from several opinions expressed in it his own shrank instinctively; and while its perversity even increased his own liking for it, as the wayward child is cared for most, he had a fear that other readers would be less forgiving. He saw the extreme probability that for some foolish faults of temper a book deserving honour in the highest might be waylaid at starting, suffer perhaps in consequence a long neglect, and not without serious injury at last emerge. It occurred to him that an attack of this kind might be so anticipated as to blunt its edge and consequence, by combining, in the same fearless review of the contents of the book, earnest expression of all the praise deserved by it with ironical indication of all the abuse to which its impetuosities had exposed it; and for Taylor's *London Magazine* he drew up such a paper. For the purpose it was excellently done, and had the effect desired. Hazlitt had indeed the first word, in the *Edinburgh Review;* but though he dealt some heavy blows at the literary Jacobinism of the Southey connection, regretted Landor's want of temper and self-knowledge, and ridiculed unsparingly his dogmatism, caprice, extravagance, intolerance, quaintness, and arrogance, he at the same time admitted his originality, learning, and fifty other valuable qualities, placed in the highest rank his deline-

ation of character, conceded to him a power of thought and a variety and vigour of style which made him excellent wherever excellence could consist with singularity; and, after naming several of his dialogues from English history as taking rank with truth itself, ended by confessing freely that in the classical dialogues he had so raised himself to the level of the men portrayed in them that all narrow and captious prejudices had there been thrown aside, he had expanded his view with the distance of the objects contemplated, and into his style had infused such a strength, severity, fervour, and sweetness, as those orators and heroes had never themselves surpassed. In critical writing however blame goes so much farther than praise, and the objections of the *Edinburgh* were not only put so sharply but were apparently so justified by the illustrations given, that, if the *Quarterly* had followed with unmixed severity, very grave damage might have been done. Julius Hare prevented it. The onslaught had been prepared (for Gifford's detestation of Landor* was in no degree abated by Southey's affection for him); but so much of it had been cleverly anticipated in Hare's whimsical parody that on the appearance of the *London Magazine* in May, the article which the *Quarterly* designed to have published in June had to be entirely reconsidered. Coming close upon the other the laugh would not have been against Landor. It did not make actual appearance till the end of the year, and had then become brief and commonplace enough. Southey meanwhile, having ascertained who was writing it, would probably have succeeded in obtaining more consideration for his friend if Gifford had not again interposed. "I liked everything in it," he says of the article, in one of his letters of January 1825, "that had no re-

* See ante, i. 262 and 352.

" ference to Landor, and nothing that had. The general " tenor I should no doubt have liked better, if Gifford " had not struck out the better parts; but nothing could " have reconciled me to anything like an assumption " of superiority towards such a man." To Hare's paper on the other hand he had given eager welcome; and he more than once declared his agreement with what Hare had said at its close, that no book had been published, since that wherein Shakespeare's plays were collected, containing so much that was excellent of such various kinds as the *Imaginary Conversations* of Landor.

Hare was nevertheless uneasy after his paper appeared. What would Landor think of it? To understand irony is not at all times easy; when we are ourselves the subject it is sometimes difficult; and in this particular case there could be no doubt that all the wild and whimsical absurdity, put forth as in ridicule, had grave warrant in the book itself. Landor took everything kindly however, and Hare's acknowledgment was full of gratitude. "Few letters have ever given me " so much pleasure," he wrote from Trinity-college on the 14th July 1824, "as that which I have just received " from you. For, besides the gratification I could not fail " of deriving from such praise, which is precious in pro- " portion to the depth from which it comes, I had felt " some doubts whether the good-will that had dictated " my criticism might not have been lost sight of amidst " the clumsiness and coarseness of the execution; and " I trembled lest you should think, as Taylor did, that " I had given a very undue preponderance to the abu- " sive portion. It seemed to me indeed that his opi- " nion arose in great measure from that commonest of " blindnesses, the inability to understand irony; but " the fault might also be mine; and I was therefore

"delighted to be released from these doubts by such a "sentence as is conveyed in your letter." The most amusing result from the article had been, he went on to say, that the criticism which already had been sent to press by the editor of the *Quarterly* had been recalled and returned to its author, that he might omit sundry passages anticipated in the parody, especially a long diatribe on the childishness of dialogues. The criticism was to appear shortly, and was to be, as might have been expected, adverse. On the whole, the critics had been favourably disposed; but, to judge from what Hare had seen, had proved themselves to be quite as ignorant of all the principles of composition as English critics usually are. Hazlitt's article in the *Edinburgh* certainly was the cleverest he had read. "He, I am well informed, "is among the greatest admirers of the *Conversations*." But Hare had little liking for Hazlitt. It was not merely that he idolised Bonaparte but that he hated Wordsworth and Southey, with whom he connected Landor in the same feeling; and Hare adds that the general impression of his article, though almost every passage of the book quoted had been praised, was, as everybody said, "How famously the *Imaginary Conver-* "*sations* have been cut up in the *Edinburgh Review*." One thing in it would not soon be forgotten. Jeffrey had inserted a sentence wherein he had the impudence to declare that but for his discipline Wordsworth would never have written the *Laodamia!*

## VII. The Southey Correspondence.

And now, reserving to a later page what befell in connection with the new edition of his book and the series of additional dialogues on which already he is

busily engaged, I resume my illustrations from Landor's correspondence of the ordinary course of his life and thoughts in Italy from the date of his residence in the palazzo Medici.

His self-invented troubles are endless. In June 1822 he is in that scrape with the secretary having charge of the legation of which slight mention has before been made, who had thought proper, he says, to treat him with such marked indignity that he had requested to be informed in what part of England or France they might become better acquainted in a few minutes. The minister himself had set the example, but the subordinate carried it rather too far. "To show his "courage, whenever he meets my wife in the streets he "walks up and sings or whistles. This has affected her "health, and I am afraid may oblige me to put him to "death before we can reach England. Is it not scan- "dalous that our ministry should employ such men? "I have a presentiment that you will hear something "of me which you would rather not hear, but my "name shall be respected as long as it is remembered." What it is all about, one finds it difficult to discover; but we also learn that he had complained in vain to the foreign minister in Downing-street, who did not answer his letter, and that curious facts were in his possession "concerning more than one of the wretches "he has employed abroad."

While this explosion was on its way, Southey had written (27th May 1822) in accents of despair to say that Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform had become inevitable; that either would suffice to overthrow "our institutions;" and that the only remaining question would be whether Church or State should go first. Some consolation there might have been, he

added, in falling before the mighty, before such men as Pym, Hampden, Milton, and so forth; but that the ruin should be effected by such people as B, H, C H, and the house of R, was like seeing a temple pulled down by wretches who would not have been thought worthy to carry a hod for the masons at the building. But with the greatest sympathy for his personal dislikes, and for his vigorous expression of them, Landor read with equanimity Southey's doleful anticipations of ruin. "The "politics of England," he replied, "are what Pitt and "the parliament made them. The Catholics should have "been emancipated at the revolution, when they were "conquered; that nothing might be attributed to threats "and power. I have suffered so much injustice, and "have experienced so repeatedly the denial of redress, "that I would gladly see the overthrow of the present "system, even at the hazard of utter ruin. Those who "favoured the measures of Pitt, in hopes of profiting "by the public plunder, cannot, if they lose the game, "complain that they must pay the stake, particularly "as they have robbed every family in England of half "its property. France was revolutionised by debt; "so will England be. Emancipations and reforms are "harmless fooleries. The mischief is done. The Bs "and that set want only a mischief of their own equally "lucrative to their party, and will raise the old hoarse "cry of reform and religious freedom. For us the only "comfort and consolation is, to have no share in, and "to derive no advantage from, the overthrow of our "country."

The question of the improvement of nations through their governments is a frequent subject of discussion between the friends; and it is curious that Southey, who at the time in the *Quarterly Review* was most eagerly

assailing the one extreme of opinion in England, and thereby giving all his strength to the support of the other, was at the same time confessing in his letters to Landor that both extremes were so bad that if a wish of his could incline the beam, he should not know in which scale to cast it. He was disposed to think however, in opposition to Landor, that old despotisms could better be modified by a single will than by a popular assembly; and he also thought that, let individuals and communities err as they might, it was apparent that upon the great scale mankind were improving; but at the same time he fancied that if he were in Italy he should approach nearer to his friend, and that his friend, if in England or in America, would draw nearer to him. Upon this point there are observations in one of Landor's letters (31st May 1823) that will be read with interest.

"No man living ever bore a more constant or a more implacable hatred towards Napoleon than I: yet when I consider that both in France and Italy he respected men of worth and genius, and that not a single man of either was neglected by him, I am disposed to regret that he is not still living and reigning, particularly when all such persons as he cherished and protected are now excluded from office and treated with contempt and ignominy. Every good establishment in Italy is quite discouraged. Priestcraft raises her proud head again. Schools of mutual instruction are shut up in all the cities. Kings unite to persecute the learned. My blood boils, I confess it, at what I see on every side. I do not wish soldiers to be the reformers of states. What a dreadful condition must humanity be in, when it can find no others capable of being so, or willing to take the lead! I am comforted by your observation that mankind are improving in England. Certainly it is not so on the Continent. I mean in France and Italy. The *maestro di casa* and confessor, the old lumber of noble houses, drive out the preceptor, and take what money was applied to the better education of the family. French and English books

are promiscuously swept away. Lying tales of miracles and conversions are taken up instead of them ; and it is a proof of nobility to do as did *nos pères*. I agree with you that old despotisms can better be modified by a single will than by a popular assembly. But as the single will capable of modifying them does not appear once in five hundred years, we cannot wait. Despotism must be crushed whenever it can be, and by whatever means."*

A few months later Landor started a subject of surpassing importance, and as to which a part of the suggestion or speculation he indulges may claim to have

* He had found it in his heart nevertheless to say many good words for the Russian despotism when moved thereto by his dislike of Turkey, in those days as hateful to him for unfriendliness to the Greeks as in later days beloved by him for friendliness to the Hungarians. The letter to Southey of which Augustus Hare was the bearer (at the opening of 1822) closed thus :

"People here are in transports at the idea of a general war, thinking it certain that Austria must sooner or later take a part in it. What a state must nations be in, which, without anger or injury of recent date, feel certain of being bettered by so great a calamity! I presume that our government will act about as wisely in this business as when it took up arms against Napoleon the second time. The thing was right, but the pretext wrong. It seems to me that we might have prevented this war between Russia and Turkey, by joining with France and all the other powers of Europe to prevent the exportation of slaves from Greece, and other atrocities not sanctioned by the customs of European warfare. As it is, I hope the people of England will resist all attempts to engage them in hostilities. Never since men fought upon earth was there so just a cause as that of Russia now is. Turkey tells her plainly that she attempted to deceive her, and never thought of performing her promise, or of executing the conditions of her treaties. She must be vanquished and Russia aggrandised. This with common prudence we might easily have prevented. We cannot now declare war against Russia for becoming powerful ; since this accession of power is the necessary consequence of her forbearance and her justice. We have wiser, more prudent, and more honest men than when we had the scoundrels Castlereagh and Canning, but they want energy and clear-sightedness. I must make up my parcel for Augustus Hare, nor indeed, not being a prophet, could I say a great deal more than I have said already. My children are well, which keeps me happy. I hope your son thrives, learns, and enjoys himself, to the utmost of your wishes, and that you have not quite abandoned your idea of revisiting Italy."

anticipated by several years the greatest triumph of colonisation in modern time.

"There is a passage in your letter on the matter of which I reflect more often than on anything else. Few persons ask themselves what is to become of the rising generation of educated men who can find no room in the three professions. Why cannot associations be formed, and why cannot ministers patronise them, of extensive colonies in Van Diemen's Land: not colonies of thieves and gamblers and mercantile men, but of gentlemen's families (as in Canada), and well-educated young men and women? Why cannot allotments of land, never exceeding a thousand acres for each individual, be portioned out and lots drawn for them, with a few hundred pounds (on security given by their friends at home) at four per cent for twenty years? I myself would go, provided the government were republican, which at that distance could be no objection to those at home. Why cannot they treat us as kindly and as wisely as a girl treats her silk-worms? We want only leaves and perches and the liberty of working in our own way. Those who have been accustomed to the decencies and elegancies of life are the only persons who will make a demand upon the industry of the mother country. I would admit no religion but that of the Moravian fraternity for public use. Others are terrible engines in the hands of despotism, and the Roman-catholic in my opinion ought to be suppressed as any association of pickpockets should be. I would oblige every priest to study and practise medicine, since the whole course of his religious education cannot well exceed twenty minutes—namely, the commands of Jesus Christ. At his leisure he may read history — three hours will do. I wish our divines would consider that many things said by Jesus Christ were intended for the Jews only, or at furthest for people then living. If our philosophers too had known this, they would have been silent upon some points, and would have found them less thorny."

Ireland is a subject that mightily interests both friends, but they are far asunder as the poles in the remedies they would apply to her. In May 1823 Landor refers to the horrible accounts of the sister country that are sent out every post to Italy, and says he had

employed a good deal of thought and time on the means of bettering her condition, intending to insert them in the conversation of Franklin and Washington; but after reflecting how little attention would be paid by those in power to whatever he might say, and that the papers were somewhat too voluminous for the dialogue, he flung them aside. Yet he remembers the substance of what he wished to recommend. Among other things, the lands in Ireland were to be valued by sworn commissioners as in enclosure-acts: leases for three lives were to be granted to all cultivators: tithes to be abolished: and compensation (to a just amount) to be made both to clergymen and proprietors from the taxes raised on Ireland, all of which should, for a certain number of years, be expended on that country. England would lose nothing by this, Landor argued: for the military force, and much of the civil, might then be so reduced as to meet the emergency. Landholders would lose nothing on the average of seven years; and the little they might lose would be abundantly compensated by security of property and person. The measure could not and ought not to be carried into effect without the general concurrence of the proprietors; but indemnity to so great an extent from government, freedom from taxes and from danger, and the pride of liberality, would appease and conciliate them. "Without the adoption of what I contemplated, "and in its utmost extent, there will never be peace in "that country. Her governors have not thought about "it so much as I have: nor could they if they would; "for I put more thought in motion every half-hour "than all they united could do in three centuries." Southey found these suggestions too startling; but his view was taken altogether from a narrower ground than

Landor's, and turned indeed almost exclusively on a distrust of the Irish Roman-catholics. What he said on that point however will be worth preserving, as well for itself as for Landor's comment. The date of the letter is 1824.

"Our prospects are blackening for a storm. The system of conciliation, as it is called, is producing in Ireland its proper and inevitable consequences. We have taken up a nest of frozen vipers and laid them upon the hearth, and now, unless we mean to leave the house to them (and the estate too), we must set to work and scotch them. A rebellion is to be looked for, the object being the separation of the two countries, and the establishment of the worst of all existing superstitions in its worst form. On the subject of that abominable system there is not a shade of difference between us; but I deduce from my detestation of it this principle: that no person who holds it ought ever to be admitted to political power. Instead of trusting them with seats in Parliament, they ought not to be trusted with the elective franchise."

"Well," said Landor to this, "I dislike and avoid "all politics. But in Ireland the errors of many cen- "turies are to be corrected. The worst of these was "omitting to extirpate Romish influence when it could "be extirpated easily, as in England and in Scotland. "The death of Cromwell, usurper as he was, was by "far the greatest misfortune that ever befell the Eng- "lish nation, not excepting the ministry of Pitt. How "very interesting even still, is the account your 'Mas- "ter' Spenser gives of Irish affairs in his times! I "have often turned to it, when I could not go on with "the *Faery Queen*."

Southey resumed the subject the following May. He announced to his friend on the 25th that he was going to Holland for a few weeks, partly to attack his cough by change of air, but mainly with the object of seeking for books relating to monastic history.

"For I am at war with the Roman-catholics: and having been attacked by Mr. Butler, who writes with all the civility and deceitfulness of a Jesuit, and by Milner, who breathes fire and brimstone like a Dominican high in the Holy Office, I am about to prove, in the teeth of these persons and the rabble who are raising the halloo against me, that the Romish religion is a system of imposture and wickedness. Half a volume of my *Vindiciæ* is printed. You may suppose what work I make among the Philistines, having such a cause to defend, and in my unshorn strength. But the best part of the book will be the historical parts, in which I shall treat of an important portion of history, and throw (if I am not mistaken) a strong light upon what has not hitherto been philosophically considered."

To this Landor replied that he could do nothing of greater importance to society, though almost anything, he should imagine, more pleasurable to himself, than throwing open the vile impostures of popery. "More "or less of it is adopted by all statesmen who can in- "troduce it. On this conviction I have sprinkled as "much antiseptic as I could into my *Conversations*. I "had written one between Penn and Harrington. It "must have been too long, had I continued it; and "rather flat, I apprehend. Unwilling to lose all I had "said, much of which was remaining in my mind, I "have written another—between Penn and Lord Peter- "borough; and it is curious that I did not insert a "single thought in it of the former, though I began "for that object. The life of Peterborough would be "a fine subject for you. We have nothing like him, "or comparable to him. He must have been as great "a soldier as Mina, and he was much more than a "soldier." "*Vix me ipse credens*," he resumes in the following month, "I have been reading a second time "your *Book of the Church*. My hatred of frauds, fal- "lacies, and dissensions, the church-jackdaws, I did "fancy would have made me loth to approach the pre-

" cincts. But the constancy of our reformers was " always an object of admiration and delight to me, " and you have done it ample justice." The same subject was renewed three years later, when Landor thanked him for his *Letters to Charles Butler*, and " the " noblest eulogy on me that it is possible I ever can " receive" prefixed to them; telling him that without any of his zeal for the Church of England he felt all his abhorrence to that of Rome, and suggesting as a remedy for such evils as the latter inflicted that all the civil distinctions between Roman-catholic and Protestant, from which at present their priesthood derived its power over their laity, should at once be removed. There was something in this view of it, though not everything.

" Without any of your zeal for the Church of England, I feel all your abhorrence to that of Rome. Every page, every argument, every fact, proves a love of truth in you. Butler seems anxious only to gain his cause and exculpate his client. The best Roman-catholics, in writing for religion, care nothing for veracity and everything for victory. In private life, in ordinary and indifferent affairs, we do not associate with men who keep bad company; the Roman-catholic, in the most momentous and most solemn, clings body and soul upon those by whom not only whatever is loose and foul is tolerated and truckled for, but who open sanctuaries for the assassin, and call him from them only to employ him. In my opinion this cursed pest is only to be vanquished by throwing down the embankments of its stagnant waters and letting them run off. Remove all distinctions between Roman-catholic and Protestant, and soon will the laity be weary of the clergy. At present they meet for mutual support and counsel; these being no longer necessary, the bond will loosen and rot away. Grant them everything; everything at once: and if they act against the laws, punish them by the laws. If the pope incites them to insurrection or disobedience, punish him as you would do any other prince for the same offence. But of this there is no danger. Calculations of gain and interest are the only movers in

the pontifical court, as in all others. Leo XII. believes as much in the *verities* of his religion as his predecessor Caius Julius Cæsar in those of his. It is a known fact that the clergy in Italy is a clergy of unbelievers. This is not the case at present in Ireland, but it will be when they have nothing else to do than to say mass. Here, the pope is not esteemed either by the higher clergy or the lower. A prefect in a school said to me, *Siede, e noi altri sudiamo.* The archbishop of Toronto spoke to me these memorable words, *La corte di Roma è la fucina di tutti i nostri guai.* Above a year ago I was conversing with two priests here in Florence on the Virgin Mary. I remarked that, whatever gentleness and tenderness she might have possessed, we saw nothing in the Scriptures to persuade us that she had so much of either as her Son had. One of them said to the other, *Vuol corbellarci;* then turning to me, *Ma, sa; sono spregiudicato anch' io. Spregiudicato* always means 'unbelieving' in the mouth of an ecclesiastic."

Lighter subjects also, and the old interchange of thoughts on matters personal to themselves, their books and their ways of life, occupied the letters; and some extracts as to these may not be unamusing.

The year of Landor's settlement in Florence was that in which the Byron and Southey quarrel raged fiercest. Southey's *Vision of Judgment** and preface had called forth Byron's *Vision* and preface; the laureat's eulogy of Landor, in the poem so confidently translating George the Third into heaven, had been followed by his antagonist's amusing inquiry whether Landor were not author of a poem as confidently consigning the old monarch to another place;† and the

* See ante, i. 469.

† See ante, i. 91-92. The editor of the last library edition of Byron (6 vols. Murray, 1855) says in a note to the preface of his *Vision*, that "it was reported of Landor that he said he *would* not, "or *could* not, read Lord Byron's works, and Lord Byron resolved to "retaliate upon the works of Landor. But their real feelings were "those of mutual esteem. Lord Byron expressed in private his ad- "miration of Mr. Landor's generosity and independence, of his pro-

carte and tierce of rejoinder and reply had closed in Byron's cartel of a more mortal defiance which Douglas Kinnaird very discreetly declined to deliver.

To Byron's published attack on Landor Southey alludes in a letter of May 1822, and says he rather supposes, after the advice given him in reply, that he will not meddle with either of them again. "I saw with "pleasure," is Landor's answer (21st June), "your vic- "tory over Lord Byron. I have no right to complain "of him. I had thrown slight upon him by avoiding "him, and I had pointed him out to contempt in my "*Dissertation*. You will find some ridicule on his "poetry, and a severe sarcasm on his principles, in two "different parts of my dialogues." But without seeing these, which indeed he did not live to see, Byron had returned to the attack on both friends; and in the thirteenth canto of *Don Juan*, which he was now writing at Pisa and which Leigh Hunt's brother published in London towards the close of 1823, had discussed the various pretenders to the laurel.

> "Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway,
> And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three;
> And that deep-mouth'd Bœotian Savage Landor
> Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander."

Landor might still have been laughing at this, which did not reach him till the following April, and which certainly failed in moving him to any sort of anger, when the sad intelligence of its writer's death was announced to him suddenly, and he at once wrote to tell Southey that he had been affected, "even deeply affected," by the untimely death of their old assailant. "All his

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"found erudition and brilliant talents; and the poetry of Lord "Byron was panegyrised by Mr. Landor in his *Imaginary Conversa-* "*tions*."

" little impertinences against me only made me smile; " and they were all provoked. His exertions in favour " of the Greeks incited me to send, immediately on " hearing of his death, a note to be added (I forget " whether to the character of Mr. George Nelly, in case " of a new edition, or to the last pages) in the forth- " coming volume. I never took so great an interest " in any cause as that of the Greeks, and if I had at " the present time two thousands a-year I would give " them more than one." To everything else in that letter Southey replied, but not to this. Julius Hare had replied however as soon as he received the note, to say how much it had rejoiced him, and how the sudden news of Byron's death had made him grieve that at that very moment he should have contributed to diffuse such an attack as Landor had made upon him.*

Another subject in the letters that appears and reappears frequently is whether or not the friends might

* Influenced by Hazlitt, whom he soon afterwards saw, Landor subsequently proposed to omit this note, and received from Hare a prompt remonstrance (April 1825), which, differing widely as I do from what is said in it of Hazlitt, I think very honourable to him. " I have " been very sorry to receive in your recent letters directions to omit " the fine note about Byron, who, whatever his worst enemies can " say, had ten thousand times more good feeling and more principle " than the new favourite who has usurped his place in your lauda- " tory notes; and I have greatly regretted the printing an eulogium " which I feel assured you will one day retract. Had you read more " of Hazlitt's writings, I think you could not speak of him as you " have done. He is indeed a person of exceeding talents, great " cleverness and acuteness; and yet I think it would be difficult to " find a single good sentence in all his works, and I know of no " writer of any merit equally liable to your favourite criticisms on " inaccuracy of expression. That note will be a strange contradic- " tion to all the rest of the three volumes; and I wish much it were " not to find a place in them." The result was that the note eulogistic of Byron was restored, and the praise of Hazlitt was restricted here to a complimentary mention of his *Spirit of the Age*.

be able to concoct between them a history of their own times: a history that would not confound them, as Landor said in the preface to one of his volumes of *Conversations*, "with the Coxes and Foxes of the age." This saying reveals something of what the history might have been, and we may be thankful that the attempt was not made. Southey was not opposed to it at first; but as time went on he saw clearly that if their employment was to be history, it should be that of other times rather than their own. He put the matter very well to Landor in telling him that the difference was not greater between the atmosphere on a fine summer's day on the top of one of their Cumberland mountains and the same air in the crowded London streets, than between his dialogues on past and on present times. The retort might have been made that this was unavoidable, and that in reality the past is better seen at its calm distance than the present in its nearness and noise; but against selection of such a subject the argument was a good one. "When you are consubstantiating your-
"self," said Southey, "with Lucullus, or Cicero, or
"Isaac Casaubon, every thought and feeling are such
"as you are the better for having entertained and ut-
"tered; and others are the better and the happier for
"partaking them. I should like dearly to see such
"a history of Rome as you and you only could write
"from the commencement of Augustus's reign to the
"end of the Antonines." To himself the temptation of trying his hand nearer home was brought close to him in 1829, when the government sounded him as to his disposition to write a history of the American war from the English point of view, as Jared Sparks had then begun to do from the American, our state papers being opened to him for the purpose. But he declined

because of other tasks. "I wish," wrote Landor when he heard of it, "you had been induced to undertake the "history of our times, beginning from the American "war. You and myself* are the only men capable of "so great a work; and you rather than I, from more "practice, more coolness, more patience, and some other "causes. It was the work I had destined to accomplish "as my last and greatest: but it can only be done in "England." Yet how little of the calm and equable temper of history either of them would have brought to such undertakings, we may judge from what had passed between them two years earlier, when the news had reached Keswick of Lord Liverpool's disablement for further public service, and they interchanged thoughts about the statesman whose way to the highest office it had opened. Southey remarks to Landor that in his judgment it would be fortunate for Canning's reputation if his broken health should prevent him from taking possession of the premiership, "for which he has long "been scheming, if he is not belied." In spite of his brilliancy of talent, and of personal good qualities that made him liked wherever he was known, nobody, according to Southey, would have the remotest confidence in him. To which Landor, whose favourite aversion poor Canning always was, made eager reply in March.

"What you say about Canning is no doubt well founded. Every rogue of a statesman is much beloved by his friends: Pitt was: Fox was: Windham was: Sheridan was. These however all yield to Canning in roguery, as much as they yield to him in abilities. Not that I value his at any great rate; but he has infinitely more than they had. Castlereagh never had rendered him any material service, and he laboured to supplant

* As far back as 1810 (see ante, i. 246) he had expressed to Southey his own desire to undertake it.

him from the first moment he acted with him; but Lord Liverpool made him what he is, and he would treat Lord Liverpool as he treated Castlereagh. I believe he lied, as usual, in saying he had received a letter from Burke on the commercial crash with which the country was threatened unless it changed its system. If he had received this letter, why did he keep it in his pocket for twenty years without ever mentioning it? Why did he not show it to Pitt, and the other members of the cabinet? Why did not he himself act upon it? Why did he not represent to his commercial friends at Liverpool the danger they were in, supported as his opinion must have been by the authority of Burke? In fact, Windham said in the presence of my brother Arden, at your friend Legge's, as he may remember, that Burke thought Canning a young man of great abilities, but rather a speaker than a statesman, and wanting both precision and dignity. I am not quite certain that *precision* was the word: in the rest I am exact. Now Windham would be guilty of any vile action but a lie, and was less jealous than any man ever was who was so vain. Besides, he never doubted of his superiority over Canning."

That Landor's interest in his friend's poetry continued to animate his letters, it is of course needless to say. Introducing Captain Shadwell Clerke to him in March 1824, he described the gallant gentleman as hardly less enthusiastic than himself on the *Roderick*, and as having declared (a fact not publicly known till several years later) that Byron himself had pronounced it to be the "first poem of the time." At the close of his letter, after saying that his children are well and begin to talk English, he asks Southey to tell him everything he can think of about his, and about himself too—excepting that if he had relaxed in the New-England poem he was not to say it, his own hopes having been fixed upon it so long. The captain was returning in September and would bring it with him if it should be printed. To such pleasant personal themes Southey readily responded always. He had written on the 29th

of February 1824* to report himself going on with the second volume of his *Peninsular War* and his *Tale of Paraguay*, and his little boy as just beginning to learn the Greek alphabet. He now, on the 14th of the next August, thanks Landor for the letter brought by Captain Clerke; tells him that his little boy is old enough to have begun upon the Latin grammar, being now in his sixth year; and adds that he had himself completed, on the previous Thursday, his own fiftieth year. Landor replied to this in November. Wordsworth's last letter, he told him, had mentioned his daughters and spoken of their beauty rapturously.† "The gravest

* It may be as well to mention that mutilated portions of this appear in the *Life and Letters* (iii. 115) under the mistaken date of 1822, the editor supposing the allusions to the *Conversations* contained in it to have referred to "a work of Mr. Landor's on the writ- "ings of Charles Fox." I take the opportunity of adding that all the letters of either friend quoted in this second volume, as in my first, are here printed for the first time. There are no repetitions, excepting in a few lines here and there embodied in my narrative, of matter already in print.

† Other little personal notices may be worth subjoining. At the close of one of his letters (21st June 1822) he grieves at what Southey has told him of an accident to Wordsworth in riding; says he was very fond of that exercise when young, but found it dangerous from the habit of forgetfulness it induced; has heard Chantrey's works praised highly, and hopes he will leave a bust of Southey to rank with that of Wordsworth; gives Southey a great many hints of domestic medicine, by which his little boy may be saved from bilious attacks without resort to the "fashionable poison calomel;" and gives good account of the health of his two children. "A very wise "man, Mr. Mogg, told me that he was wretchedly bilious, and that "by drinking a glass of cold water for breakfast, instead of tea, he "could digest anything. There is nothing less trifling than these "apparently trifling pieces of information." He adds that the heat in Florence had been beyond all precedent. "Seven horses have "fallen down dead, resting in the streets, within four days. I had "this from Dr. Cassini, who lost one, on the shady side of the road." And he ends by telling Southey that certain books he was about to send would find him if directed Palazzo Medici Tornaquinti, in

" and most philosophical father must be delighted at " this. Cuthbert will be the great occupation and " great satisfaction of your life. The only thing in " mine for which I am indebted to fortune is that my " son is born rather late in it, so that we may amuse " each other. To see the happiness of children was " always to me the first of all happiness. How pure " and brilliant is it in them! how soon it runs over " the brink, and among what shouts and transports! " Whenever my opinion is different from yours, I sus- " pect and am almost persuaded I am wrong. You " teach Cuthbert grammar. All the woes I have suf- " fered are nothing to what I suffered in learning " grammar and arithmetic.* Of the latter I know " little still, according to the process in use; and of " the Greek grammar I knew so little at seventeen " that I read over the Port-Royal yearly for more than " twenty years. My wife's brother is going to Eng- " land, and she hesitates between her younger child " and her family there. But having one sister just " married,† and another going to India in the spring, " and about to be married to Mr. Ravenshaw, the son " of a director, I think it likely she will go. I neither

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which house he should " probably end his days." In another letter (6th January 1825), after saying that Wordsworth does not tell him whether he goes on with his great work, he adds what he calls another trifling no-trifle. " It appears to me by no means a difficult " thing to write without a great exertion of the eyes; and a gray or " bluish paper may be chosen, which is of considerable importance " to those who write much."

* See ante, i. 14 and 22.

† To " Major-general Stopford, adjutant-general in the army of " Columbia," to whom Landor had just dedicated the first volume of the *Conversations*. Between him and the Stopfords the most affectionate relations were maintained to the very last, uninterrupted and unabated.

" persuade it nor oppose it, but I shall be very unhappy " without the two children she takes with her. I " never thought that you were older than me, which " it appears you are by about six months. I shall " be 50 the thirtieth of January. We may both rea- " sonably hope to see our children men, but I would " rather see mine a child than lord chancellor. . . . You " say that when you have escaped from the difficult " stanza in the *Tale of Paraguay* you shall feel like a " race-horse let loose. The racer I am certain has " been loose all the while, and as spirited as he ever " was in the vales and mountains of Asturias. I wish " to put my hand upon him in this stanza."

On the 11th of November 1824 Landor thanked him for his *Vision of Judgment*.

" The 4th of this month I received your *Vision of Judgment*, which I read through too fast, as I am apt to do, and always in the inverse ratio of what I ought. I never could bring myself to read slowly what delighted me. I resolved, on the first reading, to lay it aside for an entire week. My second reading (of this morning) was as slow and deliberate as I could make it. Never did I suppose it possible to give such harmony to English hexameters. The last line in the first page stopped me ; nor can I scan it, unless you admit three spondees at the close. In p. 28 you have made the third syllable of *diaphanous* long. It is not so in English or Greek, *φαίνω*, *ἔφᾰνον*. In prose the accent of similar compounds, and many others, is on the second syllable, such as *ἀνάβασις*. Its derivation from *βαίνω* gives it no prerogative. In p. 34, 4th line, I should read more easily if *and* were taken from the beginning. I think you are somewhat partial in admitting Taylor and excluding Barrow. In p. 39 I am doubtful whether I read as I should do, ' That its tribute of honour, poor,' &c. You surely do not make | hōnŏur pŏor | a dactyl ; and yet, unless you do, the cæsura is wrong. I have seen another (and thought I had marked it with my pencil) where the cæsura seemed to me amiss. You have overcome what I should have conceived to be insuperable difficulties. With all my practice in Latin heroic

verse, having written at least ten thousand, I am certain I could not have written any one page of your *Vision of Judgment*. The only Latin metre I ever tried in English is the sapphic. This is extremely easy. When I was at Rugby I wrote a vast number, and some few at Oxford. . . . .* Our own heroic metre is so admirable as you manage it, that I am sorry you exerted your powers in the Latin, astonished as I am at your success. For I am certain that nine in ten who read poetry with delight, would have read this with greater, if you had not leapt from your own summit of the mountain to the other.

"I receive no letter from any literary friend in which there are not some inquiries whether I know what you are doing. I can reply to this more easily than to your magnificent eulogy on me in your preface. The printer has been twice incorrect in the quotation: *nescio quid ac verè epicum* is the reading, I think, and *procuderet*."

To this on the 11th of December Southey replied; and what his letter says of poetical measures, of his reasons for preferring the hexameter over both the Spenserian stanza and the heroic blank verse, and of a subject proposed by him for a new poem not elsewhere named in his letters, will justify its preservation.

"My *Book of the Church* and the first volume of the *Peninsular War* ought to have reached you by the same conveyance with the *Vision of Judgment*, Murray having been desired to send them to your publisher at the same time that Longman dispatched the others. If they have not reached you, let me know, that they may be sent with your third volume. The misprints in the quotation from your essay vexed me when I saw them. Your book arrived when the proof-sheet was before me. I inserted the note in a hand so legible that I thought it might safely be trusted, and therefore did not require a *revise* of the sheet. But printers make wicked work, even when they are not trusted. The line in the first page at which you stumble was ruined by their dropping a letter at the press after the sheet had been corrected, to the destruction of the metre. Glaramar*a* is the name of the mountain. The *and* at p. 34 is

* See ante, i. 29, for some lines here omitted.

redundant, and only inserted to lessen a little the catalogue-like appearance of a list of names. The other two lines I read thus:

'Pure it | was and di|aphanous. | It had no | visible lustre.
That its | tribute of | honour | poor though it | be was withholden.'

There is no difficulty in writing English hexameters upon the principles of adaptation on which I proceeded. They are not more difficult than blank verse, and infinitely easier than the complicated stanza of Spenser; which I shall never again attempt when my present task is over, on account of the time that it costs me. I am not so certain that I may not write in hexameters again, a little perhaps for the purpose of maintaining against the multitude what I know to be a right opinion; but more because the character of a poem is greatly modified by the metre in which it is cast. A new measure leads to new combinations of language, and prevents all danger of repeating oneself, of which there would be some were I to write another long poem in blank verse. I think (it is as yet a mere thought) of a Portuguese subject—the first deliverance of Portugal from the Castillians: tempted to it by the character of Nuno Alvarez from whom I verily believe that of Amadis was drawn, and by the circumstance that his elder brother (a most excellent man) took the other side. I know of no subject which would afford two characters so striking in themselves and so strikingly opposed."

None other of Southey's books reported in that last letter as on their way had arrived, when Landor replied on the 6th January 1825. He was most anxious to see the *Colloquies*, he now told him, and he hoped he would abandon his idea of writing a larger poem in hexameters. "The Latin heroic verse never will give the same "pleasure, whatever may be the wonder and admira- "tion it excites, as your own in *Roderick*, to any man "whatever; and to an immense majority of readers its "harmony will be in great part lost. Be contented with "having done what no other man could do, and with "having proved what hardly anyone could have be- "lieved." On the 25th of the following May Southey

wrote again to say that at last he was at press with the *Tale of Paraguay*, that it was to be published next month if not delayed by the engraving of the plates proposed to be given with it, and that Landor should at once receive it. He added that Cuthbert and his sisters were going on well, but that he was himself the worse for the heat, was going to Holland for a month to set up, and hoped to return in tolerable repair. "I am heartily glad," replied Landor (5th July 1825), "to have so good an account of your family, " and wish that you yourself were nothing *the worse* " *for wear:* but as the world is and will be the bet- " ter for it, we must strike the balance with equani- " mity. But surely it is time now to consider health " and ease above all other things, and to make appli- " cation a mere habit, which, even as such, ought to " slacken as we advance in years. Francis Hare dined " with me yesterday; and was here a few minutes ago, " just when I was at the post-office. He will think " himself most fortunate to be at Florence when your " books come. I hardly know whether to congratulate " you on having completed the *Tale of Paraguay*. No- " thing is so delightful as the progress of such a work. " However, there is no doubt that the completion of " *printing a thing* is among the foremost subjects of " congratulation."

In all the letters of the friends, which have indeed no pleasanter passages, their families of books and children alternate in the confidences thus interchanged between them. "Till we become parents," Southey wrote in 1823 (8th May), "we know not the treasures of our " own nature; and what we then discover may make " us believe that there are yet latent affections and " faculties which another state of existence may de-

" velop." The remark originated a very beautiful passage in the dialogue of the Ciceros, the first draft of which Landor had just sent over. "I am delighted," he says (31st May), "with your observation on the " pleasure we derive from our children.* It induced " me to remember that I had not attributed to Cicero " what I should have done on this occasion. After the " sentence on the pleasure of meeting his friends in a " future state, I would add &c." The addition made,†

* " You say nothing," he remarks in a subsequent letter (6th January 1825), "about Cuthbert. I wish always to hear, not only of his " health, but of his studies; since, if I lay down any plan, which I " ought to do, for Arnold, I would wish to follow yours. Tell me " whether you employ a grammar in teaching the Latin, and what. " At present I have thought only of the English and Italian; and " proposed to add the French while the organs are flexible. I began " with it at eleven or twelve, and yet I never could pronounce it " quite correctly, although I have resided at two different times " nearly two years in France."

† The reader will not be sorry that I should subjoin a portion of this addition here. I copy it from the letter, which does not differ from the passages as printed. " The pleasure a man receives from his children " resembles that which, with more propriety than any other, we may " attribute to the Divinity: for to suppose that His chief satisfaction " and delight should arise from the contemplation of what He has done " or can do, is to place Him on a level with a runner or a wrestler.... " And yet, ah Quinctus! there is a tear that Philosophy cannot dry, " and a pang that will rise as we approach the Gods. Two things " tend beyond all others, after philosophy, to inhibit and check our " ruder passions as they grow and swell in us, and to keep our " gentler in their proper play; and these two things are, seasonable " sorrow and inoffensive pleasure, each moderately indulged. . . . " If ever you have remembered the anniversary of some day whereon " a dear friend was lost to you, tell me whether that anniversary was " not purer and even calmer than the day before. . . . When my " Tulliola was torn away from me, a thousand plans were in readi- " ness for immortalising her memory, and raising a monument up to " the magnitude of my grief. The grief itself has done it. . . . The " Gods, who have given us our affections, permit us surely the uses " and the signs of them. Immoderate grief, like everything else im- " moderate, is useless and pernicious; but if we did not tolerate and

he continues: "Before I wrote this conversation, I "would on no account open Plato. I have since read "twice over his dialogue of Socrates, and am not so dis- "couraged as I might have been. I have given Cicero "his variety, and his rambling from topic to topic, ever "pardonable in a conversation between two; but the "few touches of paternal tenderness I now give were "wanting, and I should have passed many sleepless "nights at the faultiness of my work if I had omitted "them. For I have attempted in every conversation "to give not only one opinion of the speakers, but "enough to show their character."

Replying to former kindly inquiries in that same year, Southey had told his friend that time was setting his mark upon him, but laid his hand gently; having as yet taken nothing from him but the inclination for writing poetry, though an annual catarrh had for some years severely shaken him. To this Landor now rejoined that he could not consent to attribute to time the disinclination Southey felt at present to write poetry. That inclination, he suspected, was periodical and not regular. History, of all things, was the most unfriendly to it—worse than geometry. "That catarrh of yours "might be cured for ever by a few months' residence "here in Tuscany. I have an immense palace, with "warm and cold baths, and everything desirable. Why "not come over? We will visit Vallombrosa and other

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"endure it, if we did not prepare for it, meet it, commune with it, "if we did not even cherish it in its season, much of what is best in "our faculties, much of our tenderness, much of our generosity, "much of our patriotism, much also of our genius, would be stifled "and extinguished. When I hear anyone call upon another to be "manly and to restrain his tears, if they flow from the social and "the kind affections I doubt the humanity and distrust the wisdom "of the counsellor."

" delightful places together. Here are several public " libraries, cool and quiet; and you will find the most " perfect freedom from all interruption both within and " without."

Two years later (27th September 1825) there are other references to this palazzo and to his life in Italy, which may be thought perhaps worth preserving. The old mingled yarn is in them. They tell us of sickness and idleness; of another child born to him (the last); of a general intolerance of talking creatures, with much kindly tolerance of the dumb creation; of an ever-boiling indignation against actual or imaginary enemies of freedom; of troubles arising from other heats besides his own; of the consciousness (founded on nothing particular) that by the rulers alike of Italy and England he is marked out for persecution; and of his grim satisfaction in feeling that he is no contemptible man who can have managed to exclude from every kind of preferment in the state not only his chattering children then in the next room to him, but his posterity to the latest descendants!

" I have been doing nothing for some time, not even reading; for my annual quinsey returned upon me and confined me eleven days, being followed, as usual, by a bilious fever. This affects the eyes, and indisposes one from books. On the 1st of last month I had another son, born unhappily at seven months, yet doing well and even strong. The English here talk of one of our vessels having been detained by the Austrian squadron before Mesolungi.* Some say it was a merchant-ship, laden with stores; others that it was a brig of war. O for Lord Cochrane with a couple of frigates under the arsenal of Venice! But every Christian power is friendly to Turkey and hostile to Greece. Freedom is the only bad thing in their eyes; to destroy which they care little for making the people indifferent

* Missolonghi.

to the religion of their country, and persuaded that any other is as good, if not better.

"How have I envied you the coolness of your lake and mountains all this summer! I have a delicious marble bath adjoining my bedroom; but the water was almost as warm as the air. My favourite walk along the Arno has also been rendered impracticable. The police has issued an order for killing all stray dogs; and it is impossible to walk upon the banks of the river without seeing those creatures rolling down, which perhaps at the same hour the day before were displaying so much happiness and fondness and fidelity. My children in the next room are chattering French, and contending in Italian on the propriety of each other's expressions. You are right to teach Cuthbert Latin. The learned languages will be of little or no use to my children. They and my latest descendants will be excluded from every kind of preferment in the state. I am no contemptible man who have insured all this."

Let me add that parcels of books are continually interchanged, the arrivals being sadly irregular, and the losses occasionally great. Everything of Southey's and Wordsworth's, with others they thought likely to interest their friend, went out to Florence; bounteous are the returns in kind from Landor of old books picked up in Italy; and of frequent recurrence, in the letters from England of both friends, are complaints of delay or miscarriage, sometimes of total loss, and (from Wordsworth oftener than Southey) of damage from salt water. "I "am truly sensible of your kindness," wrote Wordsworth at the close of 1823, "as testified by the agreeable, and "allow me to say valuable, present of books from your "hand; but you will be mortified to hear, as I was "bitterly vexed, that some of them have been entirely "spoilt by the salt water, and scarcely one has escaped "injury. The two volumes *de Re Rusticâ* in particular, which I did not possess, and had often wished "to consult, are sorely damaged, the binding detached "from the book, the leaves stained and I fear rotted.

" The venerable Bible is in the same state; indeed, " all to pieces. These are such unpleasant facts that " I doubt whether I ought not to have suppressed " them. You promise me a beautiful copy of Dante; " but I ought to mention that I possess the Parma " folio of 1795, much the *grandest* book on my shelves, " presented to me by our common friend Mr. Ken- " yon, who, by the bye, is happily married since I " last wrote to you, and has taken up his residence at " Bath."

Southey was more fortunate in receiving safely what had been sent to him, though by the same ship; for in a letter of nearly the same date he tells Landor that he found the box of books on his return, and they had escaped all damage from the seas. "As yet I have " only had time to place them upon my shelves, and to " see that many of them are very curious." His following letter is filled with particulars of a lost parcel sent from England;* but in that which succeeds he has again, while Wordsworth makes further complaint, to congratulate himself "that the books you sent me " were lucky enough to escape all injury." There is a fate in such things; and though boxes of books might

* " It is quite unaccountable what became of the books which " were sent with the *Vision of Judgment*. There were Humboldt's " *Personal Narrative* and *Researches*, the former five vols in six, " the latter two; Wordsworth's *Memorial of a Tour on the Conti-* " *nent* and his *Ecclesiastical Sketches;* my own *Book of the Church* " and the first volume of the *Peninsular War*, with a little volume of " *Odes* and the *Expedition of Orgua*. They were sent by Longman, " and received by Taylor. Thus far is ascertained; and Taylor's " people say they were packed with the *Vision of Judgment*. I have " a note before me from Jackson and Sons saying that the case " was shipt on the Agenora, Captain Greenwell, which vessel was " consigned to Messrs. Grant, Pillans, and Co. of Leghorn; and to " that house they refer you for information."

stray into other houses meanwhile, they were sure to find their way to Southey's at last. "*He*," wrote Wordsworth to Landor in January 1824, when describing more damage to his own from the water-rats, "appears to be accumulating books in a way that, with "my weak eyes, appals me. A large box of them, "directed to him, has just strayed into my house, "through I know not what blunder in the conveyance." Southey was in London at the time; but Wordsworth adds a pleasant picture of him and his. "You hear so often from Southey that it is wasting "time to mention him. I saw Mrs. Southey and four "of his children the other day, two of the girls most "beautiful creatures. The eldest daughter is with "her father in town. He preserves excellent health; "and except that his hair is grizzled, a juvenile appearance, with more of youthful spirits than most "men."

A characteristic letter of Landor's on these bookish misadventures acquaints us also with the sort of books that were exposed to such perils of the sea. It is dated the 22d of March 1824. "Wordsworth again tells me "that the books sent him are ruined by the salt water: "if yours are in the same condition let me know, for I "will obtain indemnity for such criminal negligence. "I am going to trust these fellows once more. What "I could recover of the books stolen at Leghorn, together with some others, are embarked on board the "brig Malvina, Captain James Brook, for London. On "the other side is a list of them. I have also sent another small box to Hare, and one to Wordsworth, by "the same vessel." Then, after alluding to the *Conversations*, and to sundry additions and insertions which even at that last hour he had been sending to Taylor,

which if too late for insertion were to be added in the notes, or even after, he gives the list.

*Folio.*

1. Alberti Magni ad Logicam pertinentia. 1506. 2. Italia Magini. 3. Valerius Maximus. 1503. 4. Tullii de Officiis. Venetiis, 1508. 5. Plinius Secundus. Forbini, Basileæ, 1525. 6. Commentaria in Plinium. Parisiis, 1530. 7. Divus Thomas in 8 Polit. Aristotelis. 1514. 8. Description historique et geogr. de France. 9. Fortificazioni di Buonanto Lorini. 10. Begole Militari di Mebys. 11. Ptolemæi libri 8. 1535. 12. P. Jovius. 1578. 13. Panvinii Pontificum Elogia et Imagines. 1533. 14. Solinus et Pomponius Mela. 1509. 15. Fulgosius. 16. P. Æmilius de rebus gestis Francorum. 17. F. Aquinas Fallaciæ. 1477. 18. Budæus. 1557. 19. W. Burlæi Porphyrii et Aristot. explicatio. 1481. 20. Cansæi Romanum Musæum. 21. Tortelli Orthographia. 1484. 22. Vita di F. Eugenio di Savoia.

*Quarto.*

1. Illuminated Ms. of Ant. Panormita. 1478. 2. Ambrosii Dictionarium Biblicum. 1478. 3. Joh. Chrisostom (black letter). 4. J. Bussieres Historia. 2 vols. 5. Memorie Storiche di Sagredo. 6. Casauboni Epistolæ. 7. Poesie di Casalde. 8. Camilli de Questiis Inarime [?]. 9. Achillis Bochii Symb. (*in Symb.* 18 *is a guillotin*). 10. Relation of F. Cortes. 1524. 11. Julius Pollux. 12. Tomasini Elogia clarorum Virorum. 13. Epistolæ Leonardi Aretini. 2 vols.

*Smaller.*

1. Epist. of St. Jerom (*for Wordsworth, to whom the other volume is sent*). 2. Sermones Funebres. 1492. 3. Vita di M. Aurelio. 4. Rivoluzione di Napoli (Giraffo). 5. Poesie di Manso. 6. Poesie di Luigi Alamanni. 1532. 7. Ordini del Cavaleare (Grisoni). 1553. 8. Opusc. multarum bonarum Artium (black letter). 9. Wecker de Secretis. 10. P. Alois Poemata (*sent by mistake to W. instead of St. Jerom*). 11. Historiæ Imperatorum. Colinæus, 1531. 12. Gregorii Turonensis. Parisiis, 1561. 13. Leonis Papæ Homiliæ. 1573. 14. Meditationes Sanctorum (black letter). 15. Guerra di Candia. 16. Scioppius Suspectæ Lectiones. 17. Barbarini Poemata. 18. Ms. of Voezuighi adrest to Filipo Buonaparte from the siege of Vienna. 19. Regole di Fortunio. 1534. 20. Di Vita Christi di Andilly. 21.

Epistolæ Pauli Sacrati. 22. Il Danubio. 23. Remundi Epigrammata. 24. Crucii Epistolæ. 25. Opuscula Spiritualia. 1537 (*the engraving at the end designed by Titian*). 26. Ant. Cerrusi Carmina. 1550. 27. Ludovico Dolce Modo di accrescere la Memoria. 28. Greg. Nazianzenus. 29. Kenelm Digby, Theatrum Sympatheticum. 30. Acarisii Quæstiones. 31. G. Hornii Orbis Politicus. 32. Rime di Ludovico Rota. 33. Boetio di Consolaz. Philos. (black letter). 34. Confessions reciproques &c. &c. 35. La Divina Settimana. 36. Ode di Casoni. 37. Christias Vidæ [?]. (Gryphius). 1566. 38. J. Propiniani Orationes. 2 vols. 39. Congiura de' Fieschi. 1508. 40. Epist. Manutii. Aldus, 1529. 41. Sphæra Mundi. 1490.*

Southey's latest news of his own and Wordsworth's undertakings were sent to Landor in February 1827. He was then busy with his long-deferred *Colloquies*, which at last were in the press, and with the closing volume of his *Peninsular War*, which was to be ready by Christmas if he lived and did well. Wordsworth was printing a new edition of his poems, which he was rearranging and enlarging. Some fruits of past labour, too, would shortly reach Landor. Mr. Kenyon was really to go into Italy that year, and would carry to Florence the

* Two years earlier he had thus described to his uncle Hill (*Letters*, iii. 287) a similar consignment sent him by his friend. "Two "or three days ago I received a rich present from Landor—threescore "volumes, of all sorts and kinds, none that are without value, and "some that are of considerable worth. The only one connected with "Portugal is *Osorius de Nobilitate*, 1542, printed at Lisbon. There "is the *Speculum Historicale Vincentii Belvacensis*, 1494; a folio "*Terence* printed at Milan without a date, not I think later than "1500; a Milan *Sallust*, 1501; *Laurentii Vallensis Opus Eleganti-*"*arum Linguæ Lat.* 1487 — all *folios;* a great many volumes of "Italian poetry and modern Latin; one volume of poems in the "Genoese, and another in the Neapolitan or Sicilian dialect, I know "not which; and an account of the sacking of Rome in 1527, by "Jacopo Buonaparte who was present, first printed in 1756 at Lucca "with the false date of Cologne, and suppressed by the Austrian "influence, so that very few copies are extant. It is a long while "since I have had so miscellaneous a cargo of varieties." And see ante, i. 460, 463.

*Tale of Paraguay*, some letters in reply to Charles Butler on the Roman-catholic religion which he was very sure Landor would like, and the second volume of the *Peninsular War*. These do not seem however to have reached Landor until late in the following year, when (Nov. 28th) he acknowledges their arrival. "The poem first "attracted me. I detest theology and shrink from con- "troversy. What a pity I thought it that the inno- "cent poor creatures" (the lovers in the poem) "could "not be left in the enjoyment of both a purer morality "and a purer religion than professional men are likely "to teach! Their death, though happy, is most affect- "ing. Poetry opens many sources of tenderness that lie "for ever in the rock without it. I doubt whether the "description of a heavy calamity would have moved "me more than the placid end of these lovers." But still another year had to pass before the long-looked-for *Colloquies* reached Florence. The lady, now Mrs. Hodson, to whom as Miss Holford he had written so well and wisely of Wordsworth* long before he had any personal intercourse with the poet of Rydal-mount, had received them from Southey, and intrusted them to a young artist whom she was commending to Landor's kindness.† Acknowledging their receipt at the end of July in that year he says, "All the pleasure I

* See ante, i. 319-20.

† "I wrote to Mrs. Hodson from Lucca," Landor replied to Southey's mention of that lady's inquiries after him, "and I hope "she received my letter; of which there is some doubt, as I sent "it by a waiter through a shower of rain, and with a sixpence "to pay the postage: two things much against it." "Your letter "reached Mrs. Hodson," says Southey in reply; "so that you see "there is one waiter whose conscience is proof against a sixpenny "temptation. Methinks he deserves a place in the Legion of Hon- "our. A letter of mine at Geneva was destroyed for the sake of "a smaller sum."

" received from your most argumentative and eloquent " *Colloquies* was less in its intensity than my sorrow at " the death of your uncle, Mr. Hill. For I well knew " the unhappiness it must have caused you; and not " only you and your family, but many deserving men " unconnected with him in relationship, to whom his " friendship and wisdom would have been unerring " guides through life. Although I saw him but once, " I remember his features perfectly, and discover, which " I should not have done without your remark, their " resemblance to Sir Thomas More's. But his counte- " nance, I think, was of a loftier cast than that shrewd " and witty man's. The one would rather die in de- " fence of his opinion, and the other in defence of his " friend."

With one further reference of the date of 1827 I will now pass from the Southey letters to Landor's correspondence with members of his family. In the March of that year he told Southey that Francis Hare had urged him incessantly to reprint his poetry, and that he meant to do so. He should include *Count Julian*, *Gebir*, about half those printed in the *Simonidea*, and some trifling ones written since. The *Julian* would be unaltered; every reference to modern times and things would be omitted from the *Gebir*;* and he would give

* Every reference, he meant, to Bonaparte. He had already publicly apologised for his exaltation of him in *Gebir;* and the passage, which appeared in his preface to the Latin poems in the *Simonidea*, is so characteristic that I shall append it here. " Si " prolixior quam par est videatur præfatio, paucis habe, lector, ra- " tionem. Brevissimo quidem operi insisto, me contra detrectatores " meos, parum cognitos, defensurus. Nulla enim ætas aut magis " superbum aut minus arrogantem tulit. Est in Gebiro meo quod " dolet pudetque scripsisse: in alterâ editione scriptum celare aut præ- " termittere dedignabar. De laudibus Bonapartis loquor. Quis autem, " ut illustribus exemplis utar, Ciceroni vitio vertendum censeat, quo

some Latin pieces. He had just written one stanza to add to a piece that Southey liked in the old time:*

> "Where are ye, happy days, when every bird
> Pour'd love in every strain!
> Ye days, when true was every idle word,
> Return, return again!"

But he doubted whether there was any merit in them, and he was certain that in the collection he was making he should leave nothing for gleaners in after-time. "I "am now indeed induced to reprint a part, lest here- "after some person should reprint the whole. I hope "the rest will never be lookt for or thought of." He expressed the same wish in the preface (dated from Florence in January 1827), remarking with equal truth and good sense that it is only the wretchedest of poets that wish all they ever wrote to be remembered, and that some of the best would be willing to lose the most. The volume was published in 1831; but not many readers, and still fewer purchasers, were attracted to it.

In his dedicatory words to Francis Hare he says that it was at his persuasion, and through his attention, that he published his *Imaginary Conversations*,

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"auctore statuam equestrem, eamque in rostris deauratam, Senatus, "ut nemini antea, Marco Lepido poni decreverit; cum ejusdem post "modo scelus amentiamque vir ille prudentissimus ac civis optimus "S. C. compresserit. Juvenem virtute bellicâ præclarum juvenis lau- "davi; mendacem, sicarium, veneficum, eo tempore pauci comperie- "rant; nobis haudquaquam notum aut etiam suspectum erat. Has "laudes posteà vellicabant, quibus non ita Bonapartis essent quam "nostræ graves." In the same preface (the Latin poems including the verses to his old master James, before quoted, i. 196) there is an allusion to his Rugby days, which I overlooked in speaking of that time. He admits the insubordination which gave offence to his old master. "Nocte intempestâ aliquando excubui, libros terens quos "interdiu neglexeram: dies enim sæpenumero venando consumebam, "aut fundam jaciendo, aut pugnis agrestibus conserendo manus."

* In the *Simonidea*, beginning "As round the parting ray," &c.

most of which, "unless you had animated and incited "me, would have remained for ever unfinished."

## VIII. Family Letters.

With his mother Landor always corresponded regularly; and his birthday never passed without a present from her which made small but welcome addition to his income. All her letters, shrewd and sensible to the last, have the affection of home about them. They have some sort of encouragement for him always; give him only kindly glimpses of the past; never tire of looking forward to a future when he shall be again among the county neighbours, of whom they send him all sorts of news; express not much interest, it must be confessed, in his literary achievements; but display, every one of them, the utmost motherly solicitude for the welfare and the future of his children. I will show this by a few extracts, in continuation of those formerly quoted,* where she and her son alike show points of character; and it is worth remarking that her handwriting is as well formed as his own, though by wider lines and larger letters it is fifty times more legible.

In 1822, sending him the county news, she tells him that Leamington, to the immense annoyance of Warwick, is becoming quite a fashionable watering-place; and she describes her daughters meeting the young ladies of Studley-castle,† "handsome fine girls, "but not like their mother in beauty or manners." In

* Ante, i. 475-478.

† Ante, i. 62. I take the opportunity of desiring the reader to substitute "fourteen miles" for "a mile and a half" in the passage here referred to, the former, and not the latter, being the distance of Studley-castle from Warwick.

the December of that year Landor sends her a miniature of his boy Arnold, who seems to her "all fun and "merriment, and looks a happy little fellow. These "indeed are his happiest days; but I hope in his future "years he will not have a hard lot, if he is blessed with "health and knows his duty to God." In April of the following year she says that she always feels gratefully, amid her growing weakness, that she had lived to an unusual age with almost every happiness she could wish. On his forty-ninth birthday (30th January 1824), which oddly enough she mistakes for his fiftieth, she thanks him for having sent her a picture of himself, which she is certain must be a good likeness of him as he then was. He had said he was so altered that she would not know him; but she had him too constantly before her eyes ever to forget his face, "and tho' this day you are fifty, "I hope you will have many happy years yet to enjoy. "I think sometimes it must be impossible that I should "have lived to see you this age. Surely it is time I "should make room for others, for I have passed my "eighty-first year, have had as many blessings as fall "to the lot of mortals, and am very willing to go. Who "would wish to outlive all their friends?"

Her next letter in that year mentions the death of Lord Byron; "a man of great abilities, which had "given him the power of doing much good, which he "failed to do:" and her next, the publication of the *Imaginary Conversations* which had now been out between four and five months. "I have heard you have "a publication just come out. For God's sake do not "hurt your eyes, nor rack your brains too much, to "amuse the world by writing: but take care of your "health, which will be of greater consequence to your "family." Nor had she anything much more encour-

aging to offer to her son's ambition even after hearing that all the world were talking of the book he had written. "I have heard your late publication highly "spoken of by many; but as I am no judge, I shall say "nothing relating to it. I wish you to take care of your "eyes and health, and let the world go on as it has "done. I think of the fate of Lord Byron, and that "those who have the greatest abilities have the greatest "misfortunes—because they have, more than others, "mortifications and disappointments."

There is something in that view of the case undoubtedly. The world really did care little to be amused as her son was amusing it, and would seem to have been quite willing to go on as before. Nevertheless the power to amuse or amend the world carries with it a necessity to make the trial; the Byrons and the Landors are not able to be mute, whatever the penalties of speech may be; the mothers who bore them are for this as responsible as themselves; and the excellent old lady at Ipsley-court would probably have been startled to know to what extent her own solid, genuine, and noble nature had but found another kind of utterance in the genius of her son. With less in herself of the substance of which the Conversations were made, she would have been readier to applaud them.

In the November of that year she formally proposed to Landor what before she had hinted to him, that she should be permitted to receive and educate Arnold in England.* She did not like, she said, either Italian or

* He was now six years old, and had pleased her by writing her a letter with his own hand, which she answered thus:

"My dear Grandson, I am much obliged to you for your letter, "and shall be glad to see you here next spring. If you are fond of "a garden, you will be much pleased with mine, for it is full of beau-"tiful flowers in the summer; and you may have a little garden of

French education. She should wish him to have an English education, and to know the country his forefathers were brought up in. Landor is grateful, but cannot consent yet. Arnold would not be seven years old until March; for the present he did not think he could live a single month without him; and he describes the schoolmistress he goes to now, saying it is not their intention to send him ever to any school in Italy from which he cannot daily return to his home, for he means himself to teach him Latin and Greek in the spring; but the time will come for England, and for the garden his grandmother has promised him. "He is as fond of it as I was "at his age. If ever he goes to any public school, it "shall be Eton, and that five or six years hence, for "about three years." Alas, the time never came. No year passed while the boy's grandmother lived in which the offer was not renewed. But if the opportunity for doing what is right is not taken in the day, the morrow for doing it never comes. In a letter to his sister Ellen two months later Landor deplores his inability to have done what was right in that case. But he had refused an invitation to Rome the previous year because he could not bring himself to leave Arnold. "In fact "I do not ever wish to be a day without any one of "them while they are children. They are different "creatures when they grow up." It might be a good reason, but it was not an unselfish one, and was the source of unutterable misery.

The letter of his sister to which he so replied, besides telling him all they meant to have done to make Arnold

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"your own that you may plant as you like. And I think you will "like to come and see your uncles and aunts. My love to your bro-"thers and sister. Believe me, dear grandson,

"Your affectionate, E. LANDOR."

happy, had been full of pleasant talk of the wonderful things they were hearing about the *Conversations*, and had mentioned an omission which touched Landor nearly. "I could not resist telling you," she wrote, "a wish that many have expressed that Doctor Parr "might not be forgotten. Learned men have desired "it, not ignorant women like me. The Doctor himself "has grieved for the omission. He said to Charles last "week, 'How is Walter? I hope he is well. O, he has "'shown a mighty mind—a mighty mind.'" The kind old man was then in failing health; and the eager letter of remembrance Landor straightway sent, reached him only on his death-bed. It enclosed a copy of what the writer afterwards printed as a preface to the fourth volume of the *Conversations*, in which he said that his first literary exercises were made under the eye and guidance of his venerable friend, corrected by his admonition, and animated by his applause; that his house, his library, his heart had been always open to him; and that among his few friendships, of which partly by fortune and partly by choice he had certainly had fewer than any man, he should remember Parr's to the last hour of his existence with tender gratitude. "My admiration of "some others I have expressed in the few words pre-"ceding each volume; my esteem and love of yourself "I have expressed in still fewer; but with such feelings "as that man's are who has shaken hands with the "friends that followed him to the shore, and who sees "from the vessel one separate from the rest: one whom "he can never meet again. May you enjoy yet for some "years, my dear friend, all that can be enjoyed of life. "I am myself heartily sated of it." The letter was written from Florence on the 5th of February; Parr died on the 6th of March; and Landor heard of the

death from his mother on the 19th of April, in a letter shrewdly wondering how the doctor, in a world of which he complained so much, should have managed to acquire so many of the good things of it as to be able to leave his married daughter thirty thousand pounds, his other daughter ten thousand, sundry sums to other people, and four thousand pounds, besides three hundred a-year, to the second Mrs. Parr.

In the same letter she sends him messages from a Roman-catholic lady (Mrs. Willoughby) who remembered him "at school at little Treherne's at Knowle,"* and who thought him likely to prove a very proud father, although she did also recollect that the only shade in his character was a "want of patience." A couple of months later she tells him of a cold she has caught, and her daughter Ellen adds that this was because she would persist in sleeping with both her windows open (she was now eighty-two); mentioning also in the postscript the disastrous end of his old Trinity-college acquaintance, Mr. Kett.† His mother's next letters, at the end of 1825, told him further about the visitors that crowded to "this new place" (Leamington), driving the gentry away from Warwick; and that the principal amusements then going on in the older and more respectable city appeared to be lion-fighting and the baiting of dogs, for which one of the aldermen had patriotically thrown open his park on the Hatton-road. In 1826 the first of his letters from home is begun by his sister Ellen, who, having occasion to speak of Llanthony, reminds him of the happy weeks that she and her mother and Elizabeth had passed there, and of the delightful walks they had taken over those beautiful hills and through that peace-

* See ante, i. 11-12.

† Ante, i. 49, 59, 60, 361.

ful valley. "I wish your son may like it, and live there, "and become an Englishman." To this however the old lady puts a characteristic closing page. After telling him that Dr. John Johnstone was going to write Dr. Parr's life, and that she thought it might have been better to get somebody to write it who was accustomed to write something else besides prescriptions, she hopes he *will* settle his son in England; but she would like to see him at Ipsley or in Staffordshire, rather than among those Welsh who had made everything so uncomfortable.

There is a story that Landor, six years after this date, when paying his first visit to England since his exile, gave unconsciously a rather striking practical comment on this remark of his mother's. He had come with his cousin and agent to a very beautiful spot on the banks of the Trent called Carwardine-spring, when he stood suddenly wrapt in admiration, crying out excitedly, "Why the deuce did not I buy this place "and build my house here, instead of at that con- "founded Llanthony?" "Rather," said his relation quietly, "why did you *sell* this place, which had been "in your family for centuries?" It was a portion of his father's land in Staffordshire obtained by intermarriage with the old family of the Nobles, and Landor had sold it to Lord Uxbridge with a rich wood still called Noble's-ruff, when making up the purchase-money for Llanthony.

Landor's last letter in 1825 had amused his mother not a little. He had told her that, there in Florence, he had not more than two or three friends, a manageable number; but that there were some dozens who called upon him, and whom he could not receive. One Mr. Hogg however, a friend of Dr. Lambe's, had come

to him lately and been very welcome. It was Mr. Jefferson Hogg, Shelley's friend and fellow-collegian, who began the poet's biography a few years ago and was stopped for plain-speaking. "A Mr. Hare, a very "learned man, was sitting with me one morning when "Mr. Hogg sent in his card with Dr. Lambe's name "also on it. I showed it to Hare, and told him I now "thought myself La Fontaine, with all the better com- "pany of the beasts about me. He was delighted." His mother seems to have been delighted too, for she told him, in reply, that she knew how he would laugh himself when he said that to his friend, and she spoke of the election for parliament going on at the time in Warwick as if it had brought up not the better but the very worst company of beasts about *them*.

In the same letter she told him that she was still able to drive out in her pony-carriage, and that if she went again to Ipsley in the summer she would send him many fruit-seeds, slips, and cuttings for his garden. Landor meanwhile had written again both to her and to Ellen, sending through the latter his thanks to Elizabeth for her intended present of poor Parr's portrait, which yet he was afraid would make him "melan- "cholic:" that being sometimes much his disposition. To relieve it, and improve his wife's health, he had taken a country-house for three years, of which two months only were expired. (This was the villa Castiglione, two miles out of Florence.) He meant to pass his life on the continent, having met with so many acts of injustice and unkindness in England. Eleven years had domesticated him; and the children might live together after his death. "I wish Julia would consent to "live entirely in the country, but she cannot exist with- "out some company in the evening—one or two, old

" or young. For my part I could live, and even enjoy " life, if I never were to see any other face than those " of my children."

To his mother, writing on the 8th of February 1826, he described a visit he was then making at Rome. So cold had the winter been in Florence that only his previous acceptance of his friend Hare's offer to give him a place in his carriage for this journey would have tempted him from home. The change of air however had done him good, but all the wonders of the eternal city did not console him for the absence of Arnold and Julia; and though he had promised to remain there three weeks, he should return within the fortnight. He had many friends with carriages in Rome, and did long distances: certainly it was the finest city in the world: never in ancient times were two such buildings as the Vatican and St. Peter's. It was the only place in the world, too, where he had himself ever met with very great attention. Both natives and English treated him magnificently, and every evening he met the most splendid society. But this only made him melancholy: for he thought incessantly of Arnold, whom he had never before been twelve hours without seeing, and of the Greek he was learning, many sentences of which he was able to speak correctly. To which it may not be inappropriate to add that I found carefully treasured among his papers, and endorsed "Arnold's first letter " to me and my reply," what follows: the little boy's round text being in letters half an inch long.

" My dearest Papa, I hope you are well. We have had all bad colds. But thank God we are now quite well again. Walter, Charles, and Julia send you a thousand kisses. And I send you ten thousand, and I wish you to come back again with all my heart. And believe me, my dearest papa, your affectionate

son, A. S. Landor." "January 31, 1826. My dearest Arnold, I received your letter to-day much too late to answer it by the post; but you will see that I was thinking of you and of Julia yesterday by the verses I send you on the other side. I am very much pleased to observe that you write better than I do; and, if you continue to read the Greek nouns, you will very soon know more Greek, unless I begin again to study it every day. When I was a little boy I did not let anyone get before me; and you seem as if you would do the same. I promised you a Greek book; but I will give you two if you go on well, and next year two others, very beautiful and entertaining. I shall never be quite happy until I see you again and put my cheek upon your head. Tell my sweet Julia that, if I see twenty little girls, I will not romp with any of them before I romp with her; and kiss your two dear brothers for me. You must always love them as much as I love you, and you must teach them how to be good boys; which I cannot do so well as you can. God preserve and bless you, my own Arnold. My heart beats as if it would fly to you, my own fierce creature. We shall very soon meet. Love your Babbo."

The "verses on the other side" were those to his "little household gods," written the day before his letter (his birthday); and differing only from the poem as printed, in the stanza that tells of the marvellous tales he will relate to sister and brother on his return:

> "Severing the bridge behind, how Clelia
> Saved the whole host to fight again,
> And, loftier virtue! how Cornelia
> Lived when her two brave sons were slain."

Later in this year there is much in Landor's letters to his mother of the gaieties in Florence, of Lord and Lady Normanby's private theatricals, of the Duchess of Hamilton's parties, and of the enjoyment all these had given to his children. In December, noticing her mention of a visit of his sisters to Swansea, following her usual adjuration to him to return to live again among them, he says that the streak of black along that most beautiful coast in the universe had never succeeded in

rendering him quite indifferent to Swansea. How beautiful did he think the seashore covered with low roses,* yellow snapdragons, and thousands of other plants, nineteen years ago.

"Two years afterwards the detestable tramroad was made along it. Would to God there was no trade upon earth! Besides, before this, thousands of small vessels covered the bay, laden with lime, and whatever else is now carried with those train wagons. The gulf of Salerno, I hear, is much finer than Naples; but give me Swansea for scenery and climate. I prefer good apples to bad peaches. If ever it should be my fortune, which I cannot expect and do not much hope, to return as you wish to England, I pass the remainder of my days in the neighbourhood of Swansea—between that place and the Mumbles. Nothing but the education and settlement of my children would make me at all desirous of seeing England again."

He adds that Lord Guildford had given him a very pressing invitation to the Ionian Islands, but he did not think he should ever move farther than a morning's walk from the table where he was writing. All this however his mother treats only as the whim of the hour, and she still steadily and perseveringly keeps before him the necessity, for his children's sake, that a limit should be put to his exile. Replying to these again in his birthday letter in 1827, he says that certainly they lost some comforts out there in Florence, but they had many others instead. And he, for his part, was perfectly reconciled to his destiny of living the remainder of his days on the continent, perhaps altogether in Tuscany. But she must continue to send him (what she had threatened to discontinue) all the Warwickshire news, for the changes interested him. In four months he should have completed the thirteenth year of his absence from

* See ante, i. 79: where, by mistake, "low roses" is printed "box roses."

England; his hair was growing white; and many who were children when he was in the county must now have children of their own. He ends the letter by telling her of a recent unfavourable season in Italy as bad as any in England of which she had ever complained. For two entire months they had only had eight fine days; frost and snow had been incessant; and the English for some weeks had been skating round the water that enclosed the city walls.

"Yours is not the only white head in the family," wrote his sister Elizabeth in answer. "Charles's hair "altered completely in about six months, so that when "he came here last winter my mother admired it, and "wondered to see it become just the same as when he "was a boy: a beautiful flaxen head, she called it: al- "most every hair is white, and as frizzy and abundant "as ever." She tells him also of other people changing, such as his nephew Charles, who, though not yet fifteen, was as tall as his father; and of some people quite unchangeable, such as he knew his old friend Dr. Lambe to be, who had not altered the least in the world; and their mother, who seemed indeed smaller than ever, but was very nimble, and "altogether wonderful, as her writ- "ing perfectly without glasses at eighty-four proves." In July of the following year the same sister announces to him the deaths, within a few weeks of each other, of two sisters of their mother, the three numbering at that time among them exactly 250 years; and adds, what will not surprise anyone who has observed as a rule how death is regarded by the extremely old, that her mother had been far less affected than she expected her to have been by this event.

The last tidings of Landor himself having been that he did not think it likely he should again move farther

than a morning's walk from the table where he was writing, of course his Warwick friends were prepared to hear any day that Florence no longer contained him. Early in August his sister Ellen, writing to introduce to him a clever portrait-painter and his wife, was told in his reply that he had gone upon a pressing invitation to Naples; but that Mr. Middleton would find him, on the 27th of that month, again "at villa del marchese "Castiglione, called Poggio alle Male, two miles from "Florence, out of the porto San Niccolò." He would gladly show him the curiosities of Florence; his wife was always at home in the evening; and though he had himself been in the habit, when living in the city, of going to the Blessingtons' from eight to eleven, he did not go over to them from his villa more than once or twice a week, the distance being three good miles.* The Blessingtons were friends of recent date, but greatly liked and valued; and he said always that he remembered no pleasanter time of his life in Italy than the summer evenings passed with them in the casa Pelosi, on its terrace overlooking the Arno. From Lord Blessington had come the pressing invitation to accompany him in his yacht to Naples; and, he wrote to his sister, as he had never seen Naples and never could see it to such advantage as in the company of a most delightful well-informed man, and as four hundred a year did not afford all the facilities and agrémens of forty thousand, she might be assured he was not very reluctant to go. Arnold indeed had not been well, but the fever had now quite left him; and there being strange unaccountable

* The letter has a characteristic postscript in which he says that "as Mr. Middleton may not know what scoundrels the greater part "of the Florence innkeepers are, not to say thieves and assassins," he subjoins the names of three honest ones.

shells to be picked up for him on the shores of Naples, of Elba, of Salerno, and twenty other places, the little fellow had given Babbo leave of absence for twenty-five days. But before his leave expired, Babbo's pleasure had suffered grievous interruption.

He will tell it best himself. Language less characteristic would not do it justice.

"It all began" (letter to his sister Elizabeth, on the 1st of October 1827) "the day after I left Florence for Naples. Arnold had had a fever a few days before, and I would not go until his physician told me he was convalescent. Not receiving any letter at Naples, I was almost mad, for I fancied his illness had returned. I hesitated between drowning myself and going post back.* At last I took a place (the only one; for one only is allowed with the postman in what is called the diligence). Meanwhile Lord Blessington told me he would instantly set sail if I wished it, and that I could go quicker by sea. I did so; and we arrived in four days at Leghorn. Here he gave me a note, enclosed in a letter to him, informing me that Julia had been in danger of her life, but was now better. I found her quite unable to speak coherently. And unhappily she was in the country. Nevertheless the physician, who sometimes passed the whole day with her, and once slept at the house, never omitted for forty-three days to visit her twice a day, and now by his great care she has reached Florence. I brought her part of the way by means of oxen, on the sledge, and upon two mattresses. To-day the physician will attend her for the last time."

It was a malignant fever, which the youngest child also caught, but recovered in sixteen days, during three of which life had been despaired of; and in that interval the other children owed their safety chiefly to the exer-

* Let no one imagine that this is too extravagant even for Landor. It runs very nearly parallel with a story told always with much enjoyment by his brother Charles of his having lost his road to a friend's house where a party were waiting dinner for him, and startling a country bumpkin by the peremptory demand that he should either at once show him the way or cut his throat upon the spot.

tions of Lady Blessington, who had driven over to the villa and brought them into Florence for a time.* These occurrences, Landor added, had turned the rest of his hair white, after taking off what was refractory and would not turn; but, thankful not to have lost one after being so near losing three of his family, they had left him at the last "strength and spirits better than ever."

In the same letter he thanks his sister for Parr's portrait. Parr had not exactly that expression when they last met, but sixteen years were passed since then; and he never could have had a high forehead, nor was there ever that distance between the nose and upper lip; however, it had brought to him the features of his delightful old friend as strongly as if it had represented them more perfectly. With a request made by his other sister, he complies by sending her, on the 18th of the following month, some account of his Neapolitan voyage; though he doubted if he could say anything new.

"Everyone is in raptures with the bay of Naples. Those who have not seen it can form no idea of its beauty from anything they have seen elsewhere. The villas of the Neapolitans are upon the roadside everywhere; and these roads are dustier than any other in the world and noisier. La Cava is of all places one of the most beautiful. It lies in the way to Pæstum. The ruins of the temples here, if ruins they can be called, are magnificent: but Grecian architecture does not turn into ruin so grandly as Gothic. York cathedral a thousand years hence, when the Americans have conquered and devastated the country, will be more striking. The Lucrine lake is a poor pond—if poor is that pond which produces the proprietor more than a hundred a year every acre of it, and this chiefly by the *cockles*. Formerly it was remarkable for the flavour of its oysters. Lake Avernus, one would imagine, is terrific. On the contrary it is a pretty little round lake, with groves full of birds

* I found a letter of warm affection from her among Landor's papers, dated the 29th of August 1827, which confirms every part of this statement.

all round. I did not see the Island of Capri, which I much regret. Elba I saw on my return: a very beautiful and fertile island, with the best harbour in Italy. I am inclined to think the people in the south of this country better than the Tuscans. I never met with a graver or sounder man than the Count de Camaldoli, who was minister to the King of Naples in the time of the Constitution. For these last six weeks I have seen him most evenings, and conversed with him the greater part of them unless when his daughters sang, which they do divinely."

Writing at the same date to his elder sister, he tells her that he had just heard the day before that the third, fourth, and fifth volumes of his *Conversations* would be out in two or three months, early in the beginning of the ensuing year certainly. The third had been printed for a year and more, but the publisher had delayed it; and another publisher had undertaken the fourth and fifth. He was sick of writing. Never would he write anything more. He had burnt all the things he had begun, and many that he had nearly completed. He was now occupied in collecting pictures. He had not seen so much of their artist friend as he wished, because of moving to his new villa; but never had he seen anyone more delighted at their last meeting than Mr. Middleton was at some pictures which he had himself lately acquired in exchange for the drawings by old masters which he bought in Bath eighteen years ago. With more money at command he could have made a fortune by the purchase of pictures in Italy. A man must live on the spot, and visit pictures daily, thoroughly to master the subject. He was but a child at it, yet the dealers thought him knowing. More of this hereafter.

To his mother he writes at a little later date, to express his delight at having heard that Ipsley had brought back her strength, and to tell her that while she and the

rest in England had been overflowed with rain, in Italy they had not had a single shower for above four months. He tells her of sickness among his children, and says that nothing is absurder than to suppose that certain disorders could come only once. In the same country they might never return; but a new climate made a new creature. He had just declined, from inability to leave his children, an invitation from the Blessingtons to visit them in Paris; and in connection with this he answers a question from his mother as to whether the lady was visited by the English. He admits to her that she was not: but in France she enjoyed the first society, receiving only the first; and never had he talked with a woman more elegant or better informed, more generous or high-minded. The close of his letter is addressed to his two sisters; notices to them a remark of his mother's to which he had not replied in writing to her; and is amusingly characteristic. The reader already knows that he was too sanguine in expecting that the concluding series of his *Conversations* would be published at the same time as his third volume. The latter appeared in 1828; but the former was still delayed, for reasons to be presently described.

"My mother has greatly amused me by wishing the very thing that has been done. Southey and Hare have full power to erase whatever they think proper to erase from my *Imaginary Conversations*. At present, as far as I know, they have exerted their authority over only two paragraphs, which they thought *actionable*. As for the rest, they would, as they will tell you, as soon think of cancelling a scene of Shakespeare. Doctor Wade and Doctor Innes would be braver. . . . I wrote long ago to thank Charles for a clever dialogue he sent me between the old king and another. I have lately had a curious anecdote of the old rogue. Lord Camden and Count Munster were deputed to make inquiry into the state of his property, and they found that he had mortgages on the pro-

perty of almost every prince in Germany, at the time when Pitt brought in a bill to exonerate the civil list. He never forgave Lord Camden for knowing it. Lord C. said so. While there is a king or priest on earth, as poor old Lyttelton said . . . but what poor old Lyttelton said, I shall reserve for my next discourse. And now to &c. &c. I remain, with Julia's love, dear Ellen and Elizabeth, your ever affectionate brother, W. L."

The previous year (1827) had been that in which he made acquaintance with "the kindest and most gener-" ous man in existence," Mr. Ablett, of Llanbedr-hall in Denbighshire, the intimacy of whose wife's sister (Mrs. Young) with Mrs. Dashwood, a cousin of the Hares, had led to the fortunate meeting;* and through Mr. Ablett in the spring of 1829 the Fiesolan villa was bought which will for ever be associated with Landor's name. The present was the year (1828) when the celebrated sculptor Gibson made, for Ablett, a bust of Landor, of which copies in marble reached England in this and the year following. It was the year too when his sister Arden died, and when from her, and from another friend deceased, some small additions were made to his fortune. His sister Ellen tells him of these; and even her dear brother's wisdom, she says to him in the course of her letter, which she had long thought to be more than mortals are blessed with, appeared to her useless compared with the humble resignation she had witnessed at both deathbeds. At the close of her letter

* I quote from a letter of Landor's to his sister Elizabeth, dated in April of this year. "Some friends of mine, I am told, are going " to Leamington: one is Mrs. Dashwood, daughter to the late Dean " of St. Asaph, the best man in England. If by chance you should " see her, I hope you will make much of her. She is cousin to " Francis Hare, my particular friend. I believe a Mrs. Young is " with her. This lady is sister to Mrs. Ablett, from whom and her " husband I and my family have received a thousand acts of kind-" ness."

she mentions his old friend Mr. Rough,* who had lately reappeared in the county, as having several times inquired kindly after him, and as having said that the *Conversations* should have produced him a good fortune. This last touch nettled Landor, and he retorted upon his old companion with an odd mixture of dislike and liking.

"The mine of wealth derived from my *Conversations* brought me three hundred and seventy-two pounds, the two editions. One hundred and seventy-two the first, two hundred the second. As to that impostor Rough, I never hear the fellow mentioned without fresh contempt. My friend Sir Charles Wentworth was at school with him, and related to me many anecdotes of his shabbiness and cowardice. However, if he had continued to cultivate poetry instead of those thistles called law, he would have been perhaps the best poet of the age. By the way, you have not read Keats and Shelley; *read them!*"

Some other notices from his family letters of this date may also be worth giving. The title of the poem by his brother Robert was *The Impious Feast;* and it well justified the later and maturer praise it received from him as a poem of very various power, and in the sustained structure of its verse possessing a striking originality.

GIBSON'S BUST, AND HIS BROTHER ROBERT'S POEM.

(25th April 1828. To his sister Elizabeth.)

"Gibson came to me the very day Ackelon brought me Robert's poem, and I give him two sittings, one in the morning, one in the evening. There have been three days, and there will be four more, before he takes the cast in plaster-of-paris. I am told that Chantry is equal to him in busts, but very inferior in genius. The one is English upon principle, the other Attic. On Sunday I read Robert's preface, which is well written. I shall not begin the poetry till I can give it an undivided attention; which will be when I get into the country, and lie under the vines all day. I hope to begin this mode of life on the 1st of July."

* See ante, i. 109, 110, and 142-152.

PICTURES AND PICTURE-DEALING.

(19th June 1828. To his sister Ellen.)

"I have laid out nearly 100*l.* in pictures, part of which I sold again for 180*l*, and the better part is left yet. If I had had 3000*l.* eight years ago, I could have cleared 12,000*l.* in the two first years. The dealers here know only the Florentine school; and one of them, the best and most honest, often asks my opinion even on this. I have put a few hundred pounds into his pocket. Our friend Mr. Middleton could not be prevailed upon to buy a Raffaelle for 500*l.* It is worth 2000*l.* and will bring it ere long. He buys Carlo Dolces and gentry of that kidney; but he has also bought a Pietro Perugino, who in my opinion comes immediately after Raffaelle and Frate Bartolomeo. I could have had it, if I had had the money, for 15*l.* It is worth about 300*l.* He gave seventy, I think. His picture of Julia is perfect. Arnold is much handsomer than he has made him. His face has the radiance of a young Apollo."

This portrait of his eldest son and daughter by Mr. Middleton was a present he had made to his mother, and it was taken to her by Augustus Hare. She thought it priceless; and until within a day or two of her death, morning and evening, used to salute the two little faces, and wish them good morning and good night.

SICKNESS OF THE CHILDREN: CLIMATE OF ITALY.

(12th July 1828. To his sister Elizabeth.)

"It is not unlikely that in another year I may have to remove to the borders of the Rhine, on account of the general badness of the climate in Italy. I should very much regret to leave Florence, where I have several friends, excellent and well-informed men: English you may suppose, for none such are to be found among the natives. The greatest loss after this would be the public library and then the picture-gallery. But the children cannot resist the heat, and I am in danger every summer of losing one or other of them. We have had no rain for two months, and there is no appearance of any. . . . My bust is finished, or rather the mould for it. Never was anything in the world so perfectly like. Gibson is the sculptor, and I doubt whether any modern one excels him."

### News of Weather and of Friends.

(8th December 1828. To both sisters.)

"I am too economical to write you a letter each, not having the skill of our divines in dividing and subdividing the heads, necks, bodies, and extremities of my discourses. Altho' I am sitting before the fire, I can hardly hold my pen from the excess of cold. We have had ice in the streets for several days. What has happened in England I cannot tell; but I had a letter from Paris dated the 14th of November in which Count d'Orsay tells me that there was snow in the streets six inches deep. Such a season never was known. . . . This morning I met Sir Robert Lawley, who walked with me for half an hour, and made many inquiries about the family. He had taken it ill that I had declined two or three of his invitations to dinner-parties; but I told him I never intended to be at one anywhere all the remainder of my life. . . . My friend Hare [Francis] has married Miss Paul, the daughter of Sir John Paul, and has 20,000*l.* with her. His brother Augustus writes me word that he follows the good example in the summer, and that Lady Jones gives him 400*l.* a year. She is his aunt, and the widow of Sir William. Have you read Southey's *Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ?* He has sent it me: it contains the highest eulogy on me I ever received, or ever shall."

He tells them, in the same letter, that his bust at Rome was greatly admired, and that Ablett had allowed him to have a copy taken for his wife and another for his mother; to whom his next letter is written, to announce that he is sending it to her. This is his last letter of the year; and in it he urgently entreats her to guard against changes in the weather. On the second of that month he had walked through a bean-field all in flower, and seen yellow and white butterflies upon them; yet on the following day, the third, people were collecting ice for the ice-houses; and though the changeableness of an English climate was nothing in comparison with that of the Italian, where there was sometimes the difference of sixteen degrees between

the front of the house and the back, it involved the same kind of danger. The anxiety thus expressed was but too well-founded, for the year then about to open was to be the last of his mother's life.

## IX. New Series of Conversations.

I now resume the narrative of the *Imaginary Conversations* from the point at which it was left on the publication of the first series. In the notice sent by Julius Hare, in July 1824, of the critical notices that had appeared of the book, he reported from Taylor that its sale had been considerable but slow, and it was therefore very uncertain how soon it might become necessary to print a second edition. At the earliest it would certainly not be published till June in the following year, so that there would be ample time for all the emendations Landor might deem it advisable to make. Were they, then, to keep back the new dialogues in order to see whether a second edition might be wanted next spring? Or should they print a third volume by itself, which might come out at Christmas? At present the manuscript in hand looked less than its brethren, but he dared say it would find itself considerably enlarged before it could see the light. Landor had seemed so desirous of printing immediately one particular conversation having reference to the grand-duke, that Taylor had proposed to him to insert it in his magazine; but feeling some doubts whether this would be approved, Hare had for the present declined the offer.

At the close of the same letter there are uneasy references to the omissions, Hare remarking that the Middleton, if he can "persuade Taylor," shall be inserted in the second edition in its original shape. Most

unwillingly had he acceded to any alteration, he added, except as to the two lines Southey consented to erase; "but Taylor was so fixed, that the only way of saving "any part of it was by some modification, which was "as slight as he would let it be. As so much has "come out without offending, he will perhaps not be "quite so scrupulous next time." In so speaking to Landor of his publisher, allowance enough was hardly made for its probable effect on Landor's continued relations with Taylor. He was not the man to suffer patiently such a censorship over his writings, or that his bookseller should be permitted to usurp an authority which such men as Southey and Hare saw no sufficient ground for exerting.* In circumstances the most favourable, even when sanctioned or committed by Southey, the omissions had been a sore subject with him, and in especial when dictated by considerations wholly personal to himself. "You carried your tenderness too far," he wrote to Southey about a passage left out of the Puntomichino, "in suppressing my story "of the thirteen lest I should be assassinated. Had I "my choice of a death, it should be this, unless I could "render some essential service to mankind by any "other."

The completion of the third volume to which Hare's letter referred was sent over by Landor to Southey four months after that letter was written. "I have "finished," he writes on the 4th November 1824, "and send herewith for publication the third and last

* There is an allusion in his next letter to Southey (11th November 1824) which shows the feeling at work in his mind respecting Taylor. "In what progress my third volume is I am quite ignorant, "not having heard from Julius Hare for several months, and publishers being personages of too high importance to communicate "with such humble men as I am."

" volume; or rather, a few supplementary passages to " it, for the greater part was finished long ago. I had " composed parts, and large ones, for the following: " Mahomet and Sergius; Charlemagne and the Pope; " Tiberius and Agrippina; Seneca and Epictetus; " Ovid and a Gothic poet; Francis the First and Leo- " nardo; the Black Prince and the King of France; " Queen Anne and Harley; Alexander and Porus; " Sertorius and the Ambassadors of Mithridates; Sex- " tus Pompeius, Octavius, and Antonius; Queen Mary " and Philip; Algernon Sydney, Russell, and Lady " Rachel; Harrington and Penn;* Charles the Second " and Sir Edward Seymour (prototype of whig roguery); " St. Louis and the Sultan of Egypt; Fenelon and " Bossuet; Cornelia and Caius Gracchus. This last " and the Tiberius would have been better than any- " thing of any kind I have ever done. I shed a great " many tears as often as I attempted the Tiberius. He " is represented by Suetonius to have seen Agrippina " but once after their forced separation and his mar- " riage with Julia, and to have been deeply affected; so " that care was taken they never should meet again. I " make him grateful to Augustus and Livia, but attri- " buting all his misery to their ambition.† Agrippina " draws their characters and gives some imaginary con- " versations. Tiberius betrays gradually his suspicious " character, but love predominates. His description of " the senate; his hatred of it; his resolution to retire " to Caprea, which he describes; his eternal absence " from Agrippina—evident marks of madness on the " mention of it. If I had preserved any one scrap of

* Of this there has already been occasion to remark (ante, i. 98) that it was certainly written and destroyed.

† See ante, p. 40.

" this, I would send it, altho' it would be good only by " its contexture. It appears to me that I should have " made a great deal more of Tiberius than I have of " Gebir and Count Julian; but I had done nothing " which satisfied me in the part of Agrippina, and " might perhaps have been a year before I could be- " come acquainted with her for the purpose." Sufficiently long, that is, to dispense with those helps by way of explanation on points of history and character, which in a dramatic composition the audience (and there must always be an audience for a drama, real or imaginary) can never altogether dispense with: the result of such too consummate form of the dramatic art being, that it meets the other extreme of a complete ignorance of its conditions, and is, for purposes of the stage and as far as any audience is concerned, no art that in the least addresses itself to them.*

" Cornelia and Caius Gracchus," he continues, " was " the other conversation on which I should have ex- " erted all my energy. Hardly anything was done in " it. This volume would have been more elaborate " and more important than the others, and would have " cost me double the time of both. Three are enough: " they will raise against me almost every man in Eng- " land. I have not yet received my copy, but I have " made large additions. Whether there will ever be " another edition is uncertain however. My heart beats " often for your *Colloquies*. I am glad that you have " adorned them with some scenery. I do not recollect " that I have done anything of the kind except on the " entrance to Ashbourne, where Walton is the speaker. " I stand agape at myself," he says abruptly, at the close of this letter. " Not only have I dared to intro-

* See remarks on Count Julian, ante, i. 268-70.

"duce Cicero and Demosthenes, Bacon and Hooker, "but Shakespeare himself, to whom they are cradled "infants. What will you think of me? Here for the "first time I shrink and shudder."

The intention thus expressed being, as we see, to close with a third volume, the subjects enumerated are to show us what was lost by that decision; and it is curious enough that, though the three volumes expanded ultimately to as much as three times that bulk, only the first, third, and fourth dialogue in the list, admirably chosen as most of the subjects are, ever reappeared; those three being ultimately sent over for the third volume.* We shall find shortly however that in a fit of temper what he called the fourth volume was flung into the fire, and this may account for the loss. The Shakespeare took ultimately another shape; and the Queen Mary and Philip, though actually sent over to Hare, was lost on its way to the printer; but, out of all the rest, of only the three named do we hear again, and as to one of them a letter of seven days' later date gives further curious detail. On the 11th of November he wrote to tell Southey that he had been able after all to accomplish the Tiberius and Agrippina (or, as he now called her, Vipsania); and thus he described the achievement. "I have been spending the "greater part of two months at castel Ruggiero, the "villa of the commissary-general here, Buccellato; and "it is here, among the rocks of the torrent Emo that "I found my Vipsania on the 5th of October. The "hand that conducted her to Tiberius felt itself as "strong almost as that which led Alcestis to her hus-"band. It has however so shaken me at last that the "least thing affects me violently, my ear particularly.

* Mahomet and Sergius was kept over to the fourth volume.

"The current would have been impassable if I had not "thrown in the midst of it the discourses of Augustus "and Livia, reported in part by Tiberius and in part "by Vipsania." These breaks to the current were nevertheless afterwards removed;* and of the dialogue as it then remained, and now stands among the *Conversations*, Julius Hare wrote to Landor, in a letter dated the 24th June 1826, that he should feel little hesitation in declaring it the greatest English poem since the death of Milton.

For the completion of the third volume Landor now of course waited impatiently, making as little allowance as he usually did for the delays interposed by his own incessant alterations or additions. "Julius Hare assures "me," he writes on the 6th of January 1826, "that "the third volume of my *Conversations* will come out "at the end of January. He however had not then "received two sheets closely written on a conversation "between the late Duc de Richelieu and others. I "am as heartily glad to clear my table-drawer of "copies and fragments, as I was the other day to "sweep off the stale remedies and sordid accompani-"ments of a ten-days' quinsey." The difference was, that, the attacks of composition being of regular and rapid recurrence, the copies and fragments were in continual accumulation. "You had better," wrote Hare soon after the above date, "let us stop the printing "off until I ascertain more clearly how far the dia-

* The new form of the conversation is thus described in a letter of April 1825. "Repentance came over me for my violence done to "Vipsania, and I wrote a new conversation between her and Tiberius. "I could not recollect one sentence of the old, and have omitted the "calmer part, the characteristic speeches of the courtiers, &c. After "four hours I completed, what does not indeed console me for the "first, but a creature of passion and interest."

" logues I have will extend; when others, if necessary, " may be added."

Thus stood matters at the time of Hazlitt's visit to Italy in that year, and while Leigh Hunt, at the close of the unsettled days of his Italian life which followed the deaths of Shelley and Byron, was still lingering in the neighbourhood of Florence. Neither of them appears to have had any great liking for Taylor, and both permitted themselves to speak of him to Landor, and of the profit that such a book as the *Conversations* should have brought its author, in a way that the circumstances did not warrant. With the feeling rankling against Taylor for the censorship he had claimed and exercised, it was as if a match had been put to a barrel of gunpowder; and explosion followed accordingly.

The ostensible occasion was a letter from Taylor, written in half-playful mood and innocent enough, though with some allusions not happily chosen, and an assumption he ought not to have taken for granted. It expressed his regret for the omissions he had caused to be made in one or two of the dialogues, and then said there was another omission for which he owed Landor an apology: the not having placed at his banker's the half-profit of the first edition, which however he might perhaps be excused from doing, as the reprint of the work might possibly alter the face of the account, and leave him creditor. This was assuming that the second edition was to be printed on the same terms as the first, for which, as it afterwards appeared, Hare had not given him authority; but remembering Landor's tone at the outset, and his haughty professions of indifference to profit, the error was at least a pardonable one, though expressed with amazing want of judgment. Landor at

once fired up at it, and his letters fell like a thunderbolt on Taylor and Hare.

The epithets applied to the former need not be repeated. Suffice it that he was forbidden to continue the printing of any part of the new edition of the *Conversations;* and that in a communication of the same date to Hare (1st April 1825) Landor enclosed, with further remarks, a copy of what he had written to Taylor. Greatly did he regret that he had had anything to do with so insincere a man. "He knows very well what I hear from "Mr. Hazlitt, that those booksellers who engage to take "half the profits never take only half the risk; yet with "this uncustomary advantage on his side, and having "sold all the copies three months ago, he delays the "payment of what is due on the plea that I may here-"after be indebted to him for something not ordered or "contemplated by me. What has the reprint to do "with what is already printed? And why should I not "receive a farthing now because I may possibly be in-"debted to him at some future time? I shall consult "Mr. Leigh Hunt and other English authors now at "Florence on what is best to do or to say on this busi-"ness. They know the man."

In a letter to Southey, ten days later, he enters more into detail; and from this it would seem not only that some letters Taylor should have answered he had left unanswered, but that while Landor undoubtedly himself had sanctioned the printing of the third volume, he did not know that any part of the second edition had gone to press, and it had really been his intention to require previously some new arrangement. "My third volume of the "*Conversations*," he wrote, "ought to have been nearly "printed ere this, but the &c. &c. of Taylor will pro-"bably be the reason why it never will appear." Then

he describes, in very forcible phrase, the &c. &c. and says it was with astonishment and consternation he had heard, only the other day from Hare, of the printing off of two sheets of the second edition. "It had been my "firm resolution to make a very different contract for "this; and above all to stipulate, as he had broken his "first engagement, that he should either print all that "you and Hare had admitted, or nothing. Principally "however I was advised to demand a fixt sum in ready-"money, as the value of the work was now ascertained "and acknowledged, and as he himself had declared his "opinion that so much sense had never been put into a "book since the time of Bacon. Exaggerated and silly "as this opinion of his may be, what must the man him-"self be to act as he has done! What have I to do with "their booksellers' accounts? He might print a second "edition, and then a third, and then a fourth, and say "after all, who knows whether the next edition I print "may not leave you in my debt! But I never intended "that he should print a second until I received all the "money due to me for the first, nor until he had signed "such conditions as I thought proper to stipulate. Hare "had no instructions from me, nor any authority what-"ever to agree on my part." He adds some reasons for suspecting foul-play (drawn from the larger number printed of the third volume than had been printed of the first and second) which are unreasonable as the rest of his letter; reiterates what he had suffered by not receiving what was due to him, of which he had promised a portion for some pictures lately bought; and then, in language which I preserve for the astounding statement it conveys, but otherwise not to be read with gravity, tells Southey he has made a bonfire of that fourth volume of *Conversations* the mysterious disappearance of the pro-

posed contents of which has already been remarked. "His first villainy in making me disappoint the person "with whom I had agreed for the pictures, instigated "me to throw my fourth volume, in its imperfect state, "into the fire, and has cost me nine-tenths of my fame "as a writer. His next villainy will entail perhaps a "chancery-suit on my children—for at its commence- "ment I blow my brains out. Can you conceive the "baseness of this fellow? He addressed to Mina in his "own name, with much complimentary phraseology, "the books I ordered him to send to that great man; "and has the impudence to send me a copy of his note, "and Mina's in reply. By the latter it appears that "his gift to Mina produced the thanks of the latter to "*him*, and yet that very copy is charged among the rest "to my account. Mr. Hazlitt, Mr. Leigh Hunt, Lord "Dillon, Mr. Brown, and some other authors of various "kinds, have been made acquainted, one from another, "with this whole affair; and they speak of it as a thing "unprecedented. I have desired Mr. Hare to offer the "copyright (as was recommended to me) to Constable "of Edinburgh; if he refuses it, to Longman. In the "latter case you may have more weight with him than "the book itself would." Then he describes his having rewritten the Tiberius and Vipsania, and thus concludes: "It is well I did it before Taylor had given me a fresh "proof of his intolerable roguery. This cures me for "ever, if I live, of writing what could be published; "and I will take good care that my son shall not suffer "in the same way. Not a line of any kind will I leave "behind me. My children shall be carefully warned "against literature. To fence, to swim, to speak French, "are the most they shall learn."

Southey took every part of this letter with equal

gravity. As to its closing lines, he told his friend that the only abiding pleasures, the only permanent satisfactions this world affords, were to be found in religion and literature; that he could not give his children an aptitude for either, if they had it not; but that, trusting to time and providence for the increase, he could prepare the soil and sow the seed. "Give your son as much "Greek and Latin as he can learn without making "learning a painful task. His place in society will "require them. Should he make no use of his know-"ledge when he grows up, it will do him no harm; but "if he should have will and ability to profit by such "knowledge, it will he a grievous misfortune to be "without it." Then as to Taylor's conduct, he says that one part of it will bear a good explanation, for that the larger number printed of the third than of the other volumes is what he has himself had experience of, in perfect good faith, with his *History of Brazil*, and other books. But that is the only thing he defends. All the other parts of Taylor's conduct had appeared to him as they did to Landor; but what vexed him was that such a writer should destroy a single line, or forbear writing one, because a bookseller showed himself to be no better than what the spirit of trade made him. "That spirit "is a vile one, and it is better to be pillaged by it than "possessed. This is my comfort always."

Not so did Hare accept Landor's charges against his friend. He met them in a way that did Taylor justice, and himself much honour; nor could I have justified my present revival of them, necessary to the purpose of this book as the mention of them was, if I had not been able to accompany them by a refutation so complete. He admits that there had been delays in replying to letters calling for immediate answer, but shows that a

portion of this blame had been his own; and, confirming both what Landor alleged of his having given no express authority to permit Taylor to print a second edition, and what Hazlitt had said of the custom of publishers bearing the whole risk when allowed to share the profits, reminds him as to the latter that the custom had been departed from in Taylor's case not at his but at their instance, and as to the former, gives him the reasonable grounds there were for supposing that an authority, understood if not expressed, did actually exist.* "The two volumes were printed, and in spite of what "Hazlitt did to retard the sale, went off rapidly enough. "You sent over materials for a third volume, and additions and corrections for a second edition. When "writing to you I spoke of it as likely to be soon called "for. I saw nothing in your letters implying any "hesitation about it, or any wish to enter into a new "compact. On the contrary, you frequently told us "that you should have nothing more to send for any of "the three volumes; and though I knew your productiveness too well to understand this literally, I drew "from it that you were satisfied, and that we might "begin printing the three volumes if occasion required."

* Hare's letter of July 14th (ante, pp. 89-90, 144) silently assumes such an understanding; and in a letter of the 22d of March preceding, introducing Captain Shadwell Clerke to Southey, Landor himself had written thus: "I transmit to Taylor by Captain Clerke five other "conversations. For, according to Hare, a new edition will probably "be required soon. My copies have not arrived yet, but I expect "them daily." Sending on this letter to Southey on the 24th of May, the Captain accompanied it by an amiable picture of their common friend. "The eve of Captain Clerke's departure from Flor-"ence was passed with the admirable author of the *Imaginary Con-"versations*, who, in the bosom of a charming family, surrounded "by his books and pictures, seems to have realised a little domestic "Utopia which no one would be more qualified to appreciate than "Mr. Southey."

In proof that Taylor had no eagerness to take advantage of his position by hastening the reprint with any notion of profit, Hare states that on making it known there was room in the market for a new edition, he had also said expressly that the Middleton dialogue would prevent his having anything to do with it, and it was only after much correspondence this reluctance had been overcome.* Landor's information that "another man" might have expected several hundreds for the *Conversations*, Hare disposes of by remarking that it was a belief not shared by the London publishers, or so many would not have refused the book; and the assertion that Taylor desired to evade the payments actually due, is refuted at every point with irresistible evidence. The offence in short is narrowed to the opening admission that there had been improper delays in replying to letters and forwarding accounts: it seemed to Hare that this was the only thing blameworthy in the whole of Taylor's conduct: nor could he for his part visit such a fault very heavily. "I " cannot, because I often commit it myself; I cannot, " because I remember what you make Cicero say, that " 'neither to give nor take offence are surely the two " 'things most delightful in human life.' On the calm- " est review of the whole matter, it seems to me that I " have been three or four times to blame for delaying " to write to you, and that Taylor has been so once or " twice; but surely there is no villainy in this, or I must

* "This led to a correspondence; I wrote several letters on the " subject, one of which entered into all the details, and seemed to " me completely to show the futility of his fears; at all events it " induced him to give up his objections altogether, and I rejoiced " to find that the world contains one person on whom reasoning can " produce some effect. As to the story in the *Pantomichino*, I had " always wished to keep it: that omission was owing solely to " Southey."

" be a fourfold villain." He then spoke of Landor's complaint that Taylor had crept into Mina's notice under his skirts. The fact was, as Hare believed, that Taylor having been desired to send Mina a copy of the *Conversations*, sent of course a note with them explaining why he sent them; and surely Landor would not blame him for having seized occasion to express in it his admiration for so great a man. Mina acknowledged the receipt in a note to Taylor, who valued it as he ought, but Mina deferred thanking Landor till he could send him a copy of the work he was himself projecting;* and that he did send him this copy was a proof that Taylor could not, as had been suspected, have sent the *Conversations* as coming from himself. Hare wound up his letter by saying that after Landor's outrageous attack he had felt it his duty to come forward in behalf of his

* This production was a pamphlet descriptive of his services; and to both the pamphlet and letter of the great Spanish soldier Landor referred in writing to Southey of his book on the Peninsular War in September of this year (1825). "I hope you have been able " to obtain some materials from Mina for the latter part of your " Peninsular History. The summary of his exploits, which he sent " to me, contains little more than what I knew already; but I am " certain that he has it in his power to throw the clearest light on " some most important transactions. Whether the French were the " foolisher in the invasion of Spain, or we the baser in permitting " it, is indeed a problem. The Rey Netto, I see by the papers, has " hanged the only man left in his dominions capable of rendering " him any great service. The Italians talk with admiration of Lord " Cochrane's meditated services in favour of the Greeks. It remains " to be proved whether his anchor can be weighed up from the foot " of Modern Faith—the Christian Faith that devotes herself to the " service of her sister the Mahometan. I shall quote, in the *Conver-* " *sations* I am about to print, your remarks on the conduct of Fer- " dinand towards his father. The impartiality you have shown to " all parties will render the book of the highest value, even to those " who cannot estimate the labour of research required for it, nor " the purity of its composition. Now, for the first time, I cease to " regret that anything could have withdrawn you from poetry."

friend; and he declared finally, that so far from Taylor meriting such treatment, Landor, on the contrary, was under considerable obligations to Taylor for the pains and care he had bestowed on the *Conversations*. The letter was dated from Trinity-college on the 21st April 1825.

When it was written Taylor's own reply to the charges had not been received; but Hare, on being made acquainted with them, had immediately written as above acquitting him of blame, and Taylor's letter reached Cambridge the day after Hare's went from that place to Landor. It confirmed Hare's statement on every point; and the money-account enclosed with it, for which a cheque had already been sent to Landor's agent at Rugely, established everything with scrupulous accuracy. He confessed his fault in having left some letters unanswered, but admitted no other. "I "detained Mina's book and note in the hope of pro- "curing some safe-conduct for it, so many of our "parcels having failed in reaching Mr. Landor. We "have now sent it to M. Morsa under cover, as de- "sired.* Of course, with all my admiration for Lan-

* I found Mina's note among Landor's papers, and subjoin an accurate copy of it. The second volume of the *Conversations* had been dedicated to him in language of magnificent eulogy, and this is his acknowledgment.

"*Plymouth*, 22 *de Junio* 1825.

"Muy Señor mio, Con algun atraso llegó á mis manos la apreci- "able carta de V. de 1° de abril ultimo, á la que mis padecimientos "fisicos (que me obligaron á salir de Londres) no me han permitido "contextar hasta ahora.

"Ciertamente ignoraba yo que los dos primeros tomos de la obra, "*Imaginary Conversations of Literary Men and Statesmen*, que me "presentó Mr. Taylor, fuesen por encargo de V. Tal es la razon de "no haber dicho á V. nada sobre el particular, cuando tube el honor "de remitirle el pegueño extracto de mi vida. Mas ahora que lo sé, "debo dar á V., como lo egecuto, las devidas gracias por la atencion "de mandarme su obra; igualmente que se las doy por la honra que

" dor's genius, I must decline all future concern with " his works; but I doubt not another publisher will " readily now be found. Even the timid firm of " Longmans, who once, I believe, published for him, " would probably be tempted now." Nor was it the worst part of his letter where he thanked Hare for having defended him even before he could himself be heard. "You have done me, on a trying occasion, the " most important service I ever received, and I cannot " but henceforth regard you as a friend whose esteem " I hope never to forfeit. I ought not to have been " afraid, knowing you; but somehow I never expect " any high degree of virtue from my fellow-creatures. " This arises perhaps from my never having put it to " the test before. I always dreaded making the experi- " ment; henceforth I shall take a higher standard."

Writing again from Trinity-college on Sunday the 24th April, Hare sent this letter to Landor, telling him that he would see from it how much pain he had been giving to a most simple-hearted and amiable man. He would also, Hare trusted, have become convinced how futile had been the grounds of his indignation; and he would be thankful that his friend had had it in his power not to suffer the wound to rankle, but could instantly soothe and heal it. "You say, in the

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" me dispensó dedicandome el segundo de dichos tomos, y por las " expresiones con que entonces en esa dedicatoria, y despues en su " carta, me ha querido V. favorecer, aunque en mi no concurra " merito para ellas.

" Aprecio infinito las advertencias que para mi gobierno se sirve " V. hacerme, de las que me aprovecharé si llegase el caso; que- " dando entretanto muy reconocido á esta bondad de V.

" Tengo una gran satisfaccion en asegurar á V. que soy con la " mayor sinceridad

" De V. muy att^o^ y ob^do^ servidor,

" FR. ESPOZ Y MINA.

" *To Walter Savage Landor, Esqre.*"

"conversation on the death of the grand-duke, 'lose "'nothing, as you hope for heaven, of that which may "'give you a better opinion of your fellow-creatures—a "'just and noble one of God's great work.' The prin- "ciple is a truly beautiful one, and I rejoice much in "having been the means of leading Taylor towards it. "O that you yourself would more regularly act accord- "ing to it, and believe, when you see something that "appears not quite right, that it may as often be a "mistake as a misdeed!" Beneath all Landor's wild irascibility there was a noble nature. He accepted silently this wise rebuke. Taylor's assumed censorship of his writings remained still a point of offence which Hare had too lightly passed over; but not another complaint was made by him. Taylor was afterwards spoken of with respect, and in Hare increased confidence was placed. Upon the last letter reaching Landor he gave amusing proof of it. He had been sending meanwhile a succession of instructions, each recalling the last, and Hare thus referred to them in a postscript. "About a new publisher I do not know "what to do. As your second letter contradicts the "first, your third says you will have nothing to do "with either Longman or Constable, and I fear a "fourth may come with a new scheme, what am I to "do? After having failed once so egregiously, I do "not like trusting anything but your express desire; "and any way the second edition now cannot come "out before Christmas." The fourth letter brought the express desire that Hare should act for the best according to his own judgment, and gave him also full authority.

Not until August 1826 was Hare able to send over a copy of this second edition to Landor in Italy. Writ-

ing to his brother Francis in October of that year, he tells him that he had, by Hayter the painter, sent out the volumes two months before; that the third volume, though printed, was not yet published; that this volume was still better than its predecessors; and that the second edition had been in an equal degree improved and enlarged. Mr. Colburn was the new publisher; and, for the impression printed of the edition and of the additional volume not yet issued, had paid two hundred pounds. Against the better advice of Julius Hare, however, he had declined to issue the new volume until the success of the second edition had been ascertained; and this falling short of his expectations, the other was held over until the beginning of 1828. There is nevertheless no further complaint from Landor. The eagerness of invention has been upon him during all these months, and the delight of giving form to his fancies has sufficed for him. In this the man of genius finds a comfort against many troubles. Dialogue after dialogue had been written in the interval with astonishing ease and enjoyment; and in a letter to Southey of the 27th September 1825 there is this characteristic passage: "Julius Hare having told me that I had sent "enough materials for *two more* volumes, I hope to see "two more printed by the end of January."* The

* In the same letter he tells Southey what he calls a pleasant anecdote of "some fellow at Edinburgh" having admitted into his magazine a silly and indiscriminating eulogy on the *Conversations*, and being ordered some months afterwards to apologise to his readers for having done so. "In this there is more than Scotch "baseness; more malignity than armed the sycophantic ruffian "against Keats. It shall not pass unchastised." The chastisement he inflicted in his conversation with his Florentine and English visitors by describing the Scotch magazine-men, after rifling him and thanking him, as retaining the pilfer and retracting the thanks; and by throwing out his famous challenge to the "sturdiest of the con-

thing was not possible in the most favourable circumstances. As it was, two more Januarys were to pass before even his third volume saw the light; and for that fourth and fifth another publisher had to be found.

At the end of June 1826, a few days after the second edition appeared in London, Julius Hare wrote to express his opinion of it, and also of the unpublished third volume. That the second was superior to the first edition was implied in its having nearly 400 pages more, the new parts being always worthy of the old, and often superior to them. Many of the conversations seemed to him to have been very much improved, especially the Porson, the Alexander, the Franklin, the Lascy, the Puntomichino, the Aristotle, and the Chatham, which last was now become worthy of a place among the rest. In the former edition he hardly thought it was. In the Cicero too he had found many additions that had delighted him, and above all the exquisite allegory, to which he would pay the highest praise by saying it was the most Platonic passage in the two volumes. Very often also the logical connection was more distinctly brought out, and the whole had certainly acquired more

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" nexion," that he was to take the ten worst out of the seventy conversations, and if he equalled them in ten years he would not only correct in future (under the rose) his English for him, but give him a hot wheaten roll and a pint of brown stout for his breakfast. This, with what he said of Hazlitt, disappeared from the revised dialogues; but it was not more honourable to him to have praised that masterly writer for criticism more vivid and vigorous than any that had appeared in the century, than for the objection he made to its employment at any time in keeping up literary enmities. He grieved over all such, he said, "but particularly when they are exercised against " the ornaments and glories of our country, against a Wordsworth " and a Southey. For it has been my fortune to love in general " those men most who have thought most differently from me, on " subjects wherein others pardon no discordance."

of the tone of conversation. "Still, in the highest merits "of composition, in the delineation of character and "of passion, and in irony (such irony as I find in "the Coleraine and the Bossuet, and at the conclusion "of the Peter, the Richelieu, and the Soliman), the "third volume is decidedly superior. The Tiberius I "should feel little hesitation in declaring the greatest "English poem since the death of Milton." In some cases, Hare went on to say, as in the Leopold and the Tooke, he feared Landor would miss the *callida junctura;* and once or twice the insertions had been injurious. The note at the end of the Chatham was more contemptuous as it first stood; and he had felt a good many doubts about the addition to the Anne Boleyn. That to the Jane Grey was perfect. He had thought it impossible to add to it without injury;* but the addition had even increased its unity, and more fully brought out Jane's pure simplicity. Hare had taken no steps yet toward printing the new conversations. "One should wait, I think, to determine, by the sale "of the third volume, what number of copies to print. "Have you heard of Southey being returned to par- "liament for the borough of Downton? I suppose it "is that he may contend the Roman-catholics. In his "*Vindiciæ* he has a note on the *Imaginary Conversa-* "*tions*." Since the date of his previous letter Hare had taken orders in the English church; but he continued still for the present at Trinity-college.

At this time Southey had not replied to Landor's letters for some months, and it was not until February 1827 he explained his silence. A bad accident had

* In his paper in the *London Magazine* he had said of it, "Anne "Boleyn will be welcomed as their companion by Antigone, Imogen, "Ophelia, and Desdemona."

deprived him of the benefit he expected from his trip to Holland in 1825; and the shock that awaited him on his return from another visit in 1826, when he lost his youngest daughter, again undid all the good that had been done. It is a melancholy letter he now writes to his old friend, sad even for the cheery way in which he speaks of the old busy projects that are about him still, because it reveals the consciousness that any other life than the life of labour that had so early broken him down has ceased to be possible for him now. Landor's reply is full of grief. The pleasure he looked for and began to receive from Southey's letter had ceased at once, at the first words almost; and never in the whole course of his existence had he been oppressed by a heavier sorrow than he had suffered the whole of that day from what it told him. "The last I heard of you " was that you were elected member of parliament, and " that you had declined to take your seat from a want " of qualification. What a scandal to the administrators " of public affairs, to the country, to the age!" He informs him (the date is March 1827) of his own visit to Rome in the winter, and of his having remained a whole month because of many friends he had in the place well acquainted with the sites of the antiquities, and some who were ready to show them to him all day long, Francis Hare in particular. But Florence was a better city to live in, and he doubted if he should ever leave it. Had Southey quite given up his idea of coming into Italy? Might not such a total change of scene be useful both to him and Mrs. Southey? France and Holland had many things in common with England; the face of the country and the feel of the air were the same; but Italy had nothing in common. "We are " at the extremity of the old world: France, with Ger-

"many, England &c, is the middle one." Then he tells Southey that a copy of his second edition has gone to him, that the third volume will soon be on its way, and that he has finished two more volumes, a fourth and a fifth. "Whether they will ever be printed I "know not, and never will inquire. This is left with "Julius Hare."

There was precisely the same uncertainty a year and a half later, but it had not meanwhile restrained his ardour of composition; and the result was told to Southey in November 1828. Francis Hare had urged him, he said, letter after letter, to make up the hundred of his conversations. He had thrown away many half-written ones, but at last he had completed the number, and perhaps he had done amiss in admitting any that contained living characters. When Southey should have read the third volume, which at last was issued, and a copy of the sheets of the fourth which would be sent along with it, he was to say whether their contents were, as Julius Hare fancied, better than the two first. He feared himself they might not be. But about the two last being better (what he had sent for one volume having expanded into two) he had no doubt; and very anxious and restless he had been that each duad should excel the preceding. "I have had no letter from Julius "Hare since the month of March, but I have received "the third volume, and the fourth also, though with-"out the dedication. What progress is made in the "fifth and sixth I am quite ignorant."

In that March letter Hare* had only announced to him the expansion of his fifth volume into two, and

* At the end of it he announced his brother Francis's approaching marriage, and spoke of the pleasure they all felt "at the prospect "of his ceasing to lead the life of a vagrant."

had given him little hope of its going to press as yet. But the fourth and fifth were in hand; Mr. Ainsworth was to be the publisher; and infinite had been Hare's troubles in connection with them. The printer had not recently been making much progress, but had promised to resume his former diligence; and the publisher was still objecting strongly to the bulk of the volumes. "One of between 500 and 550 pages makes "a very good octavo: if it be larger the expense be- "comes very heavy, and it is impossible to make a "proportionate augmentation in the price. Now the "last calculation, certainly not *over*-rated, gives us 1500 "pages for the fourth and fifth volumes, and I think "therefore you must determine on having a sixth." Still there came fresh disputes as time went on; a full year had interposed before Hare wrote again; he had in the interval been obliged to withdraw the two printed volumes from the publisher who had undertaken them; and it took a good deal of time (Hare wrote at the end of July 1829) to find a substitute. "The *Conversations* "are too classical and substantial for the morbid and "frivolous taste of the English public, and few pub- "lishers, except my friend Taylor, look beyond the "saleableness of a work. Duncan has at length agreed "on the terms of sharing the profits, if there are any. "The sixth volume is not yet gone to a printer, and, "as I am going abroad for a couple of months, must "wait till October. I would that it were in my power "to extend my journey as far as Florence, that our "epistolary might be succeeded by a personal acquaint- "ance; but I fear my time will not allow of that, as "I must spend some days at Bonn to learn report of "Niebuhr's second volume." He and Thirlwall were now engaged in translating that remarkable book; and,

two years before, he and his brother Augustus had published anonymously their *Guesses at Truth*.

The weeks were passed at Bonn, but the journey was not extended to Florence, and until Landor's visit to England in 1832 the friends did not see each other. With the publication by Mr. Duncan in 1829 of the volumes above named, Hare's connection with the *Imaginary Conversations* may be said to have ceased. For the sixth volume he failed to find a publisher at his return, and that task somewhat later devolved upon me.

Meanwhile, in a letter of April 1829, Southey told Landor that the first volume of his unpublished series (the first of the volumes afterwards issued by Mr. Duncan) had been sent to him. Some things in it he wished away, but as to very very many more Landor would know how truly they must have delighted his old friend; and in especial, he said, Lucullus and Cæsar had thoroughly pleased him as through every line of it one of the most delightful of all. Southey added, in reference to certain passages on Keats and Shelley, in whose marvellous genius and untimely fate Landor had of late become deeply interested by intercourse as well with their writings as with personal friends of both, that he had been deceived concerning Shelley; not as to his genius, which was of a very high order indeed, but as to his character. He had himself believed as long as it was possible that Shelley's errors were only errors of opinion, and that he would ripen into a right-minded man. But now he knew how bitter was the mistake he had made.

It remains only that, as with the first series of the *Conversations*, I should give account of what the second series contained; but, the general character of the work and its mode of treatment having been sufficiently placed before the reader, the task that now awaits me

is easier, and may, with a few prominent exceptions, be briefly dismissed.

## X. Contents of the New Series.

The three volumes contained only nine more dialogues than were in the first series, but some were of greater length. Eleven of the subjects were taken from modern politics; three were of a personal turn and character; sixteen were illustrations of biography, eight of them relating to English worthies, and the other eight to Italian, French, or German; five might be classed as historical, the speakers being rulers or princes of past times; and there were five Greek and five Roman conversations. I will take them generally in this order.

It was Landor's settled opinion, frequently expressed during his residence in Italy, that the sovereigns of the continent then reigning were responsible for all the revolutionary tendencies that agitated Europe at the time; and the violent reaction witnessed by him even before his return to England was but the fulfilment of what he had confidently foretold. Prominent among the princes that seemed to him despicable, and for characterising whom as the most ignorant and gross barbarians that had appeared since the revival of letters he is indeed not harshly to be judged, were the French and Spanish Bourbons, the kings of Spain and Portugal, the rulers of Austria and France, and the Pope (Leo XII) with his confederates in Italy. In one of the political dialogues the speakers are Don Victor Saez and El Rey Netto; in a second the latter prince reappears with his brother sovereign of Portugal, its title being Don Ferdinand and Don John-Mary Luis; in a third, Miguel

and his mother are introduced; and in a fourth we have Leo XII. and his valet Gigi. Throughout them the principal object is to show the inseparable connection of tyranny and superstition with cruelty; of cowardice with religious persecution; and of all with unspeakable silliness. Landor's apology for sometimes putting better talk into his dialogues than his assumed talkers were capable of, will here only apply in a Rabelaisian sense. Not a redeeming grace is given them here, unless in that relish for their own baseness which in the expression of it has a gusto of enjoyment so intense as to amount to genius. Few are the passages extractable from these dialogues that might not shock a reader unprepared for the lengths of infernal malignity and ferocious cruelty which fanaticism of any kind will not scruple to defend under the pretences of religion; and only three or four times does Landor plainly confess to the hidden meanings of satire underlying these repulsive utterances. One is where Victor Saez tells his master that a legitimate king can never have a surer ally than what is called a constitutional minister, because it is the experience of all those gentry that the people are a football to be fed with air, and that the party always sure to be the winner is the one that kicks it farthest. Another is in the information communicated by Miguel to his mother, on the remark of somebody that the wit of "Don Jorge da Cannin" would immortalise him, that it was no good nowadays people trying to make themselves immortal, for that immortality, his confessor told him, had become so creaky and crazy that he would not be tempted by an annuity upon it at three years' purchase: in short, that true immortality in this world can come only from the Pope, two centuries or so after burial, and when all but his Holi-

ness have forgotten the deeds and existence of the defunct about to be beatified. A third is where Don Ferdinand describes to his royal brother the two principal English ministers, Canning and Castlereagh, as the hot-water and cold-water ducts of the grand vapour-bath by which the holy alliance meant to cure all the maladies of nations, the one talking like a liberal while the other is crying down liberality of all kinds, but both in a conspiracy to chouse the people, and snatch the bread out of the mouths of the popular party. And a fourth is where the Pope's valet tells his Holiness that he had heard only a few days before of some one having said that the representative of St. Peter and the monarchs his friends and allies, striving and struggling to throw back the world upon the remains of chaos, reminded him of nothing so much as the little figures round Greek vases, which strained at one thing and stood in one place for ages, and had no more to do in the supporting or moving of the vases than the worms have. Ah! cries Leo, that is not your language. "Not an Italian's, not "a continental's! It breathes the bluff air of England."

Of the political dialogues two more have each a crowned head for its hero, the King of the Sandwich Islands being one, and the King of Ava the other: the object being, in the first, to exhibit the ignorance of a savage who should imagine that court-dresses were an absurdity, or should expect that a title implying a duty carried with it the duty it implied; and in the second, to caricature the claims as well as the achievements of royalty in the western world by showing that what a monarch of Ava cannot but regard as falsehoods incredible and preposterous, have been for scores of years in Europe ordinary matter-of-fact occurrences. Two others bring in leading European statesmen. In the

one, Villèle and Corbière, displaying between them the condition of contempt to which they have reduced the country they govern, rejoice to have so gagged France that she dares not even talk of the Napoleon for whose glory she had sacrificed so much; and, having nevertheless no alternative but to consent to the recognition of Greece, find it not their least bitter mortification to be thereby obliged to agree with "an idle visionary, an "obscure and ignorant writer, who in a work entitled "*Imaginary Conversations* had been hired by some low "bookseller to vilify all the great men of the present "age, to magnify all the philosophers and republicans "of the past, and to propose the means of erecting "Greece into an independent state." In the other, Pitt has a farewell interview with Canning, in which his experience of the proper way of serving the state is imparted much after the manner of Swift in advising servants of a lower grade, amounting in the whole, we may say, to three leading suggestions: that he is to speak like an honest man, to act like a dishonest one, and to be perfectly indifferent what he is called. A striking passage on Pitt's poverty occurs in this dialogue; and I cannot pass unnoticed another in which, reassuring his protégé against the doubts that beset him, Pitt says he'll find the country going on just as it has gone on. "Bad enough, God knows!" exclaims Canning. "Yes," rejoins Pitt, "but only for the coun- "try. People will see that the fields and the cattle, "the streets and the inhabitants, look as usual. The "houses stand, the chimneys smoke, the pavements "hold together: this will make them wonder at your "genius in keeping them up, after all the prophecies "they have heard about their going down. Men draw "their ideas from sight and hearing. They do not

"know that the ruin of a nation is in its probity, its "confidence, its comforts."

The remaining three dialogues strictly political had reference to the Greek revolution. In the Photo-Zavellas and Kaido the aspiration of the Greeks for independence even as early as the beginning of the century, receives affecting illustration; a young chieftain resisting the importunity of his sister that he should not place himself in the power of one of the pashas, and quietly sacrificing life that his countrymen may be undeceived. The same purpose of illustrating Greek nobleness and hardihood is also in the conversation of Odysseus, Tersitza, Acrive, and Trelawney, where, by means of a visit made by an English sympathiser with the existing struggle, Shelley's and Byron's friend, to an outlawed Greek family in their fastness or cavern on Parnassus, their character and aspirations are vividly reproduced, in language picturesque as the mountain scene and eloquent with all its associations. "Nations live and "remember," says Odysseus accounting for his countrymen in arms, "when princes have fallen asleep by the "side of their fathers, and dynasties have passed away." Finally, in Nicholas and Michel we have the struggle on its political side; the Czar's brother informing him of the position in reference to it taken up by European states, and reporting also views and prophecies respecting it acquired from a travelling Englishman; the Czar himself thinking so highly of these that he is eager to offer to so wise a man the star of a privy councillor and a post on the Caspian; and Michel's comment on the offer giving us plainly to infer who the wise man was. "He informed me that having lately been conversant "with Sophocles and Plato, he entertained the best-"founded hopes, in case of a maritime war, he should be

" nominated, on some vacancy, as worthy of bearing his " Britannic Majesty's commission of purser to a fire- " ship."*

Of the three conversations having a personal interest, the first, between Lord Coleraine, the Rev. Mr. Bloomsbury, and the Rev. Mr. Swan, with much ironical humour contrasted a couple of clergymen of the same church, the one a perfect type of what her liberal and forbearing practice should be, the other a methodistical impostor who forces himself into the sick-room of a racketing, gaming, dissolute Irish lord, by whom before his day of grace he had been plucked at the gaming-table, in the hope to get his money back as a legacy from the dying sinner. The second was in the form of a narrative, comprising several other dialogues besides that from which it took its title of the Duc de Richelieu, Sir Firebrace Cotes, Lady Glengrin, and Mr. Normanby: giving under the latter name some vigorous experiences only slightly disguised from Landor's own; showing Tom Paine in his lodgings in Paris shortly after Robespierre's fall; in the notices of Normanby's life including a full-length sketch of his father the village-schoolmaster, some persecutions for opinion which

* In a preface afterwards cancelled Landor declared that his political dialogues had been the most difficult part of his task, for that " a man does not lose so much breath by raising his hand above " his head as by stooping to tie his shoestring ;" and to this a few lines from a letter to myself may perhaps be worth adding. " Of course " the fellows who attack me for personalities in my conversations " and for personalities about creatures perishable and sordid as " themselves, never heard of Plato, or have the least notion that " that earliest and most celebrated composer of prose dialogue has " introduced contemporaries of as worthless and almost as mischie- " vous a character as the worst in mine. Rely upon it that the " book which carries about it nothing to mark its own age will rarely " be very interesting to another."

even a life so humble could not then escape, and some love-adventures in which a very genuine old-world humour alternates with delightful pathos; describing an Irishman's journey from Florence to Rome;* and closing with some sketches of Ireland herself, impartial in their sunshine and their shade. This dialogue was a special favourite with Emerson, and deserved to be: for though travelling far a-field, and too often losing connection by the way, it contains passages of mirth as well as sadness in a strain of tender delicacy not always usual with Landor; and in several places, as where Normanby relates his having called-in an auctioneer to sell his father's library, and what the good schoolmaster thought of particular books† is noted side by side with

* From its succession of pictures one may be taken. "We slept "at Siena. . . In the morning, instead of vineyards and cornfields, "a vast barren country, cracked by the heat, lay wide open before "me. It looked like some starved monster, from whose powerless "bones one still wishes oneself away. No hedge was there, no tree, "nor bird of any kind to inhabit them if there had been. I saw no "animal but one long snake, lying in the middle of the road."

† A part of what he said to his son when he gave him Potter's *Æschylus* to read, shall be preserved here. "Christopher, I doubt "not that Thespis was preferred to him by the graver critics; there "was something so unaffected in a cart, and so little of deception "in wine-dregs; and yet, Christopher, the *Prometheus* is the grandest "poetical conception that ever entered into the heart of man. Homer "could no more have written this tragedy than Æschylus could have "written the *Iliad*. Mind me, I do not compare them. An elephant "could not beget a lion, nor a lion an elephant. Critics talk most "about the *visible* in sublimity: the Jupiter, the Neptune. Magnitude and power are sublime but in the second degree, managed as "they may be. Where the heart is not shaken, the gods thunder "and stride in vain. True sublimity is the perfection of the pathetic, "which has other sources than pity; generosity for instance, and "self-devotion. When the generous and self-devoted man suffers, "there comes pity: the basis of the sublime is then above the water, "and the poet, with or without the gods, can elevate it above the "skies. Terror is but the relic of a childish feeling: pity is not "given to children."

what the man of the hammer thought of them, we have things as characteristic as any in the conversations. The grandest old preachers are passed in review. "Lord "help us! we have newer things by years and years." When Leighton, Taylor, Barrow, are dwelt upon, maybe, says the auctioneer, maybe; but here is "Doc- "tor Hugh Blair, with his noble cassock and five-guinea "wig, close, trim, and hard, as the feathers round an "owlet's eye, he outsells them twenty to one." Whereat poor Mr. Normanby has to content himself with a philosophical reflection which Landor found frequently useful in his own case: "Let no writer be solicitous of "Fame; she is more uncertain and more blind than "Fortune: let them do for the best and be prepared "for the worst." But in sayings of individual significance the last of these personal dialogues was the richest of all.

Landor here was principal speaker himself, talking with two visitors at his palazzo, an Englishman and a Florentine, of such divers topics as arise in common conversation, but with a mastery of every subject handled and a precision of style that common talk is stranger to. The date of the dialogue was the time of the death of the reigning grand-duke (son of Leopold) whose virtues receive ungrudging homage, though, in displaying by some touching stories his delicate consideration for the meanest of his subjects, it is thought necessary at the same time to make grim apology for such trifling and idling in a man of his rank at a crisis "when the first "princes and opera-dancers in the world were at the "congress of Verona fixing the fate of nations." Opinion is also given of the city ruled by Ferdinand, though in terms of less unmixed eulogy than are applied to her ruler; for we are told that they are a stinging as well

as honeyed little creatures who inhabit that central hive, not created for the gloom of Dante, but alive and alert in the daylight of Petrarch and Boccaccio. Those opinions of Shelley, too, we find to be here expressed which Southey thought to be less merited by his character than his poetry;* and with these were joined some remarks on Keats in a spirit of keener appreciation. Ranking him with Burns and Chaucer, not merely for the freshness of his apprehension of objects of common life and external nature, but for what Sidney calls "the elementish and ethereal" parts of poetry, Landor goes deeper in his criticism of Keats than is always his wont; and since the dialogue was written two more generations of readers of poetry have gone far to confirm its judgment, that "time alone was wanting "to complete a poet who already surpassed all his con- "temporaries in this country in the poet's most subtle "attributes."† Landor adds how great was his own regret that it had not been his fortune in Italy to know either of these young men who within so short a space

* Ante, p. 167. Something will have to be said of this hereafter.

† I forbear from preserving now the scathing words directed against the malignity of personal abuse which then disgraced literature, and embittered, if it did not actually shorten, the young poet's closing days. But these were followed by a fine remark: "Fame often "rests at first upon something accidental; and often too is swept "away, or for a time removed: but neither genius nor glory is con- "ferred at once; nor do they glimmer and fall at a shout, like drops "in a grotto. Their foundations in the beginning may be scooped "away by the slow machinery of malicious labour; but after a sea- "son they increase with every surge that comes against them, and "harden at every tempest to which they are exposed." It is to be added, of our own days, that if "malicious labour" now seldom besets the start of the young claimant for the laurel, we seem, on the other hand, to be falling into the as profitless and dangerous habit of conferring genius and glory all at once. The danger now, to the old hands as well as the new beginners, is on the side of excessive praise.

of time had added two more immortal names to the cemeteries of Rome. With Keats the opportunity had not arisen; and from Shelley he had turned away when they both lived in Pisa, because of a story of the tragedy of the poet's first wife told him by Mackintosh. But what he further says in this dialogue of his general avoidance of the society of literary men, from a disinclination to take part in their differences, and to receive displeasure or uneasiness at the recital of their injuries, is within my experience true. Nor less true, as I tested abundantly during my long intimacy with him, is what he remarks upon his English visitor's request that he would repeat verses he had written on Keats and Burns. "I rarely do retain in memory any-" thing of my own, and probably you will never find a " man who has heard me repeat a line." Of his writings generally he adds that he is far from certain that in their inferences they are all quite sound; but he believes that they will give such exercise in discussing them as may tend to make other men's healthier. "I " have walked always where I must breathe hard, and " where such breathing was my luxury: I now sit " somewhat stiller, and have fewer aspirations: but I " inhale the same atmosphere yet." All the indifference he professed to the good opinion of his contemporaries, I cannot say that he felt; but of the tricks and arts of authorship he had none, and at the least no man had a better title to say that, whether his books were read in that age or the next, was a matter no more adding to his anxiety or occupying his speculation than whether it should be that morning or the next afternoon.

The subject reappears in perhaps the finest of all the sixteen dialogues I have classed as illustrations of

biography, where Newton talks with his old tutor Barrow at Cambridge before going up for his master's degree. Much of this is a comment on Bacon's Essays, which it is not extravagant to say is as good as the essays themselves; much has a personal reference; and every part is suggestive in the highest degree. "Rise, "but let no man lift you," is the counsel of the old divine. "The best thing is to stand above the world; "the next is, to stand apart from it on any side. . . . "Have no intercourse with small authors: cultivate "the highest: to reverence and to defend them. . . . "Those who have the longest wings have the most "difficulty in the first mounting. . . .* Do not be ambitious of an early fame: such is apt to shrivel and "to drop under the tree. . . . Reputation is casual: "the wise may long want it, the unwise may soon acquire it, a servant may further it, a spiteful man "may obstruct it, a passionate man may maim it, and "whole gangs are ready to waylay it as it mounts the "hill." Newton having remarked as to some point that he is not quite satisfied: "those who are quite satisfied," rejoins his friend, "sit still and do nothing: "those who are not quite satisfied are the benefactors "of the world." To another of Newton's misgivings there is also a word of reassurance wisely as well as widely applicable, where Barrow tells him that quick-

* The theme is pursued in another passage, where the slow recognition of genius is likened to the tardy discovery of the precious metals. "Thus it is with writers who are to have a currency through "ages. In the beginning they are confounded with most others; "soon they fall into some secondary class; next, into one rather less "obscure and humble; by degrees they are liberated from the dross "and lumber that hamper them; and, being once above the heads "of contemporaries, rise slowly and waveringly, then regularly and "erectly, then rapidly and majestically, till the vision strains and "aches as it pursues them in their ethereal elevation."

ness is among the least of the mind's properties, belonging to her in almost her lowest state, not abandoning her when reason itself has gone, and abounding on the race-course and at the card-table: "education does "not give it, and reflection takes away from it." So, where the same speaker calls Newton a great inventor, says it is a silliness to apply the quality of invention in literature mostly or altogether to poetry or romance, and pronounces the imagination of the philosopher to be more wonderful than anything within the range of fiction,—or where, speaking in the same strain of secrets of science, he declares that in every great mind there must be some, for that every deep inquirer has discovered more than he thought it prudent to avow, as almost every shallow one throws out more than he has well discovered,—we have still, in these as in numberless other instances, the sort of sayings all the dialogues are rich in (this one singularly so), sayings that seem to have so wanted to be said that the utterance makes them common property. I have heard Landor humorously complain of the many poachers without license or acknowledgment who thus had sported over the manor of this very conversation, protesting that he could forgive them if in taking his sentences they would take as well the advice contained in them, and declaring with his hearty laugh that never had he put so much wisdom into so few syllables as in the last words of Barrow to Newton. The younger Isaac has asked the elder whether a studious man ought to think of matrimony, and the elder has replied that poets, mathematicians, and painters never should; but that other studious men might, after reflecting upon it twenty years. Newton thereupon shows himself disposed to give up his mathematics and reflect the twenty years. To

which says Barrow: "Begin to reflect on it after the "twenty, and continue to reflect on it all the remain- "der; I mean at intervals, and quite leisurely. It will "save to you many prayers, and may suggest to you "one thanksgiving."

Another equally attractive dialogue in the class of which I am speaking was the Penn and Peterborough, founded on that passage of Spence where the friend of Swift and Pope says he took a trip once with Penn to his colony of Pennsylvania; introducing the friends as they traverse on horseback the yet untamed forests stretching in the direction of the Pacific, and for its principal themes of talk opening out fields of speculation and inquiry as vast and unreclaimed; forms and tenets of religion and government, institutions and establishments in their tendencies spiritual or social, and the direction or extent to which new communities should take example from old in the arrangements, usages, and graces of life. The dialogue is a very picturesque as well as powerful one. It would be hard to say which speaker talks the best, and the horses are as good a contrast as the men who ride them. The stout contemplative black mare with her bushy mane and tail, white in one fetlock and hoof and with a broad white streak down her forehead, one feels to be as much the proper animal to carry Penn, as, in the high-bred gelding with his silvery tail and body bright and flashy as a marigold, wide-nostrilled, loud-snorting, and slily-snapping at his comrade, quick-paced, tricky, and mettlesome, we see the very beast to be bestridden by Peterborough; and Landor's sympathy being quite as much with Penn's dislike of establishments and liking for republics as with Peterborough's free thinking and aristocratic tastes, fairer play than usual is shown to both sides in all the ar-

guments. These of course I turn away from here; having only space remaining for a few pregnant words wherein the mischievous cry that would exclude a Shakespeare or a Milton, supposing them likewise to have received the requisites of fortune, from being ever proposed or thought of for election in any borough where they might happen to be born, because forsooth it is men of business that are wanted and not men of books or genius, is disposed of by Penn: "As if men "of genius are not men of business in the highest "sense of the word; of business in which the State "and Society are implicated for ages!"

Of the other six conversations taken from English biography there are four, the Leofric and Godiva, the John of Gaunt and Joanna of Kent, the Lady Lisle and Elizabeth Gaunt, and the Walton, Cotton, and Oldways, which take rank with the Jane Grey and the Anne Boleyn as very exquisite prose-poems. Godiva was a favourite heroine of Landor's; in his boyhood he used to steal away from Warwick to attend her fairs and festivals;* and with consummate delicacy he has treated her in this scene, showing how Leofric's vow was made and her own resolution taken, and what were her timid tender thoughts the night before she rode through the city. The time of the John of Gaunt scene is when the people have risen against his suspected intention of seizing his nephew's crown; when he is saved only by the interference of the popular idol, his brother's widow, the mother of the child he would have wronged; and the stronghold which angry missiles had well nigh shaken down, is in almost greater danger of being rent asunder by wild acclamations of joy. "Lan-"caster!" exclaims Joanna; "what a voice have the

* See ante, i. 32.

"People when they speak out! It shakes me with as-
"tonishment, almost with consternation, while it esta-
"blishes the throne: what must it be when it is lifted
"up in vengeance!" The time chosen in the third scene is when that Elizabeth Gaunt is brought to Lady Lisle's condemned cell whom Penn saw place round her body with her own hands the faggots that were to consume her for the same crime as Lady Lisle's, of having given shelter to one of Monmouth's adherents; but unlike her fellow-martyr in the fact that she had not thereby saved a beloved one who loved her, but only a wretch who had saved himself afterwards from fresh peril by betraying his preserver. Yet there is no feeling in her heart of anger or reproach. Her sole anxiety is that self-reproach should be saved to him, that the taunts of others may not reach him, that the knowledge of her death should be withheld from him. "I
"saved his life," she says, "an unprofitable and I fear
"a joyless one: he by God's grace has thrown open
"to me, earlier than I ever ventured to expect it, the
"avenue to eternal bliss." The cry raised by Lady Lisle at these words, which at once makes us feel that from both sufferers the bitterness of death has passed away, closes worthily this pathetic little poem. Nor is the fourth, the Walton and Cotton, a less beautiful though a quite different idyl; fresh as a page of Izaak's own writing; a natural country landscape overrun with charming thoughts; and with a sweet soberness in its cheerfulness and sunshine that, as Walton says of the effect upon himself of sights and sounds of nature, makes us readier to live and less unready to die. "We mortals
"are odd fishes," the old angler adds. "We care not
"how many see us in choler, when we rave and blus-
"ter and make as much noise and bustle as we can:

" but if the kindest and most generous affection comes " across us, we suppress every sign of it, and hide our- " selves in nooks and coverts." He is moved to the saying by some early love-pieces of Doctor Donne's, which the old retired tutor whom he and Cotton are visiting, and who in his youth had been Donne's curate, has preserved and exhibits for their admiration.*

Briefest mention may suffice for the two concluding subjects from English biography, Archbishop Boulter and Philip Savage, and Romilly and Perceval; the one a discourse on Irish grievances and remedies, and the other a discussion of English law and lawyers; this last being also one of the themes taken up by Malesherbes and Rousseau, in the first of the eight dialogues where famous foreigners converse. It is hardly so striking as might have been expected from Landor's knowledge of Rousseau and the startling resemblance between them in points of character, but what is good in Rousseau's part is very good; as the fretful talk about society and the court, the petulant attack on Montesquieu and Voltaire, and the impassioned eulogy on Joan of Arc. The best things however are said by Malesherbes, who tells his friend that in his politics he cuts down a forest to make a toothpick and cannot make even that out of it, and that his moral questionings and misery are mere self-invited

* The style of Donne is so happily caught in one of these pieces, not its extravagance only but its genius, that I cannot resist quoting it here. "He must have had an eye on the Psalmist," says the good Oldways in reading it; "for I would not asseverate that he was in- " spired, Master Walton, in the theological sense of the word; but I " do verily believe I discover here a thread of the mantle:

" She was so beautiful, had God but died
For her, and none beside,
Reeling with holy joy from east to west
Earth would have sunk down blest;
And, burning with bright zeal, the buoyant Sun
Cried through his worlds, *Well done!*"

torture. "It is as much at your arbitration on what "theme you shall meditate as in what meadow you "shall botanise; and you have as much at your option "the choice of your thoughts as of the keys in your "harpsichord." Why, if that were true, says Rousseau, who could be unhappy! "Those," Malesherbes replies, "of whom it is not true." In two others of these dialogues French immortals appear, in glimpses perhaps more characteristic: Montaigne talking with Joseph Scaliger in his lightest, wittiest, least reverent fashion; and Bossuet, sent by the king to compliment one of his child-mistresses on her elevation to the rank of duchess, listening with a half-mournful, half-smiling gravity to the giddy, vain, wild, gentle, childish, joyous girl, until at last the very danger of the good-hearted sinful little creature moves him to tell the truth to her, and as the courtier drops from him the God rises and speaks. There is hardly a finer thing than this in the whole of the conversations.

Wolfgang and Henry of Melchtal, Beniowski and Aphanasia, Catherine and Daschkoff, and two dialogues of Boccaccio and Petrarch, Chaucer taking part in the second, complete the biographical series. The first reanimates with dramatic intensity and force one of the old Swiss legends of the tyranny overthrown by Tell; and the way in which the rough quaint humour of the peasantry is brought out in the quiet unpretending homeliness of their resistance to the Austrian, gives a wonderful beauty to the pathos of the closing picture where Melchtal has to lose his eyes for sheltering his beloved son. The second is an incident of Russian story in which a Siberian maiden effects the liberation of a Polish youth, for whose safe custody the Empress Catherine has made her father responsible, and after a

struggle, in which love conquers all, flies with him. The third brings upon the scene, with appalling vividness, Catherine herself, who is shown with her maid Daschkoff outside the chamber-door within which Orloff and the rest are murdering her husband. The two last are delightful specimens of humour and character, the one showing us Boccaccio visited by Petrarch in his villa at Fiesole, and the other Petrarch pacing the cathedral green at Arezzo with Chaucer and the author of the *Decameron*. The happy adaptation of scene in both dialogues is perfect, and the design is to reproduce as exactly as possible the respective styles of these three great masters of dramatic narration. Chaucer relates in language of a vigorous simplicity by what adventures Sir Magnus, one of the half-witted Lucys of Charlecote, becomes educated and humanised by the wars in which his social rank compels him to engage; and, with such bright exactness of local colouring as a Warwickshire Chaucer might have laid on every scene, he astonishes his Italian friends with a Warwickshire knight's ways of life in the middle of the fourteenth century. Petrarch in his turn regales his friends with a story of a stately conceited knight of Gisors, betrayed by the intensity of his selfishness into marrying the loosest impropriety instead of the most strait-laced strictness. While Boccaccio carries off the prize of laughter from both by his tale of the jealous wife, who had put her maid into her own bed and gone to sleep in Jaconetta's on the very night when the husband has proceeded in penitence to his proper place of rest. This would translate into a page of the *Decameron*, and yet is excelled by what Boccaccio had told his friend in the first of the dialogues of Monna Tita Monalda's love-story, where the artlessness of the

narrative has a very subtle charm, and impropriety itself partakes of the innocence of the father it confesses to. "Now, Messèr Francesco, I must inform you "that father Fontesecco has the heart of a flower. "It feels nothing, it wants nothing; it is pure and "simple, and full of its own little light. Innocent as "a child, as an angel, nothing ever troubled him, but "how to devise what he should confess. A confession "costs him more trouble to invent than any giornata "in my *Decameron* cost me."

Of the five historical dialogues three have their scenes in the East. The Alexander and Priest of Hammon is a grim laugh at the vainglorious pretensions of the conqueror, who, demanding from the priest confirmation of the vulgar belief that not Philip but Jupiter was his father, the deity having found his way to his mother under the form of a serpent, not only receives this sacred testimony, but information, that, other issue of the same intrigue having given him a sister also god-begotten, it is Jove's will that, like the Persian monarchs whose sceptre was become his, brother and sister should marry; and eagerly following the priest thereupon to the cavern in the temple where his bride is said to be awaiting him, not indeed with all the family comeliness in her face but with a form that is awful and majestic, he finds "a vast panting snake." The Mahomet and Sergius shows the prophet, disgusted with the corruptions of the old religion, consulting the Nestorian monk upon the several points of the new, which he designs to be embodied in his Koran; and, the object being wholly satirical, the witty side of the father of the faithful is all that is presented to us, not without something of resemblance to Landor himself, notably in his laugh. When he has told Sergius that he means to strengthen the

oriental against the occidental church by permitting priests to marry, and the monk objects on the ground that if the new church bids them have wives of their own she may be likely soon to come to such a pass as to bid them have none *but* their own, which would be "a grievous detriment to the vital interests of the "faith," the effect of the saying on the prophet is thus described: "Mahomet, thou art the heartiest laugher "under heaven.' Prithee let thy beard cover thy "throat again. There now! thy turban has fallen be-"hind thee. Art thou in fits? By my soul, I will "lay this thong across thy loins, if thou tossest and "screamest in such a manner, to the scandal of the "monastery." Before he leaves however he has re-established the monk's faith in him. Telling him that under an oath to secrecy he had unfolded to Labid the poet what he intended for the first chapters of his Koran, and that Labid had thereupon cried out that he was a greater poet than himself, "Begone upon thy "mission this instant!" exclaims Sergius. "Miracles "like others have been performed everywhere; like "this, never upon earth. A poet, good or bad, to ac-"knowledge a superior! Methinks I see the pope "already in adoration at thy feet, and hear the patri-"archs calling thee father. I myself am half a con-"vert. Hie thee homeward: God speed thee!" The Soliman and Mufti exhibits a counsellor of the great sultan giving him reasons why his order to have the Koran translated into the languages of all nations should not be complied with. "O son of Selim! if "every man reads, one or two in every province will "think." The finest thing in the dialogue is the sudden surging-up at its close of that eastern passion for pleasure in which all goodness and wisdom are submerged and perish.

The remaining two subjects from history, treated briefly, but both of them in the highest degree dramatic, were William Wallace and Edward the First, in which at the supreme moment of his victory the Scottish conqueror suffers ignominious defeat, in discovering that splendid life is as powerless as hideous death to bend the conquered to his will; and Peter the Great and Alexis, where the son is brought back a captive after his flight to Vienna, and his father, loading him with brutal and coarse reproach, remits him for trial to the senate, and hears afterwards of his death. Despite the too repulsive barbarism of Peter, there is something grand in this dialogue. One sees that the poor youth himself has a consciousness, all the time, that this monster of a father of his has a necessary work in hand for the continuing or perfecting of which the justice and tenderness of his own nature disqualify him; and it is this that breaks his heart, not his father's death-warrant. The philosophy applicable to this part of the subject may be said rather to underlie the dialogue than to be written in it, but it is there; and no one would have relished more keenly than Landor that portion of Carlyle's wonderful book in which the father of Friedrich lives for us again.

The five Greek dialogues were Anacreon and Polycrates, Xenophon and Cyrus the younger, the second conversation of Demosthenes and Eubulides, Diogenes and Plato, and Epicurus, Leontion, and Ternissa. The first is a dramatisation of one of the most delightful of the narratives of Herodotus, the ring of Polycrates, into which Anacreon, who had been friend to Polycrates before he became tyrant of Samos, is introduced by way of contrast; the poet showing himself the shrewder of the two even in the craft of government, warning the

other that tyrants never perish from tyranny but always from folly, and showing him his only safe counsellors. "You, my dear friend, who are a usurper, for "which courage, prudence, affability, liberality, are ne- "cessary, would surely blush to act no better or more "humanely than an hereditary and established king." Lessons of government and religion are conveyed in the talk also of Xenophon and Cyrus; but the disciple of "Socrates the Mage" has hardly on either theme the better of the Persian prince, on whom there seems to have fallen some light from the East prophetic of a wisdom wiser than the Athenian.* The second conversation of Demosthenes and Eubulides was one of Julius Hare's especial favourites, and justly, for in parts of it the mind of the writer is at its highest elevation. The time is just upon the death of Philip, when all Athens has crowded "buzzing" with the news into her central streets, leaving to the two friends the country and fresh air, and, "what is itself the least tran- "quil thing in nature, but is the most potent tran- "quilliser of an excited soul, the sea." To this fine passage I will add that other in which the great orator, disturbed by the levity of his countrymen at a moment when they had need of their steadiest resolve, recalls a former and nobler time. "I have seen the day, Eu- "bulides, when the most august of cities had but one "voice within her walls; and when the stranger on

* At the close, when Cyrus and Xenophon take their spears for a tiger-hunt, a tigress which a peasant has stumbled on in her lair is thus described, as she lies suckling her cubs. "On perceiving the "countryman, she drew up her feet gently, and squared her mouth, "and rounded her eyes, slumberous with content; and they looked, "he says, like sea-grottoes, obscurely green, interminably deep, at "once awakening fear and stilling and compressing it. . . . He "passed away gently, as if he had seen nothing; and she lay still, "panting."

" entering them stopped at the silence of the gate-
" way, and said, 'Demosthenes is speaking in the as-
" sembly of the people.'" I expressed a doubt to Landor once, I remember, whether in both these conversations he had not made the language of Demosthenes too figurative; and he made me a very ingenious reply. He had introduced him in both, he said, talking with a professed rhetorician, and very differently therefore from his usual practice before the Athenian commonalty. When indeed, even here, he had shown him in argument on a matter of fact, a project of policy, or an application of law, he had given him his good sense and had not shorn away a hair from his strength. But all this was very different business from a country walk with an ancient master of scholastic exercises; and might it not fairly be supposed that Demosthenes would be glad enough of that opportunity to change his habit of speaking when in public? On the margin of the dialogue at the time I made a note of the illustration employed by him. "A man who has long been
" travelling sits down willingly, but lies down more
" so; for a total change of posture is more grateful
" to him and more natural than a partial. The man
" himself is unaltered by it: his dimensions, the girth
" of his loins, and the breadth of his shoulders are the
" same." The objection is not altogether met, but we see his sensitive anxiety to be thought to have preserved in these writings what is supposed by many of his critics to have formed no part of their plan. The intrusion of himself into a dialogue, it should be kept in mind, does not necessarily always exclude the rightful speaker. Demosthenes tells Eubulides how he composed his orations, and it is not less true of the old Greek because it happens to be also the way in which Landor com-

posed his conversations. "It is my practice, and ever "has been, to walk quite alone. In my walks I col- "lect my arguments, arrange my sentences, and utter "them aloud. Eloquence with me can do little else "in the city than put on her bracelets, tighten her "sandals, and show herself to the people. Her health "and vigour and beauty, if she has any, are the fruits "of the open fields."* There are one or two still living in Florence who have frequently met Landor composing his dialogues aloud among the hills at Fiesole.

It is the same when Plato challenges his assailant Diogenes, in the conversation that bears their names, to demonstrate where and in what manner he has made Socrates appear less sagacious and less eloquent than he was; and enjoins him to consider the great difficulty of finding new thoughts and new expressions for those who had more of them than any other men, and of representing them in all the brilliancy of their wit and in all the majesty of their genius. "I do not assert that I have "done it; but if I have not, what man has? what man "has come so nigh to it? He who could bring with- "out disparagement Socrates, or Solon, or Diogenes "through a dialogue, is much nearer in his intellec- "tual powers to them than any other is near to him." Here again it is not the less Plato speaking because it is Landor also, to whom it is difficult not to apply a number of other sayings in this very dialogue; which has otherwise, in the tone adopted as to Plato, the same defect I have indicated in speaking of the Chesterfield and Chatham. The truth is, that Landor's recent

* So also in a dialogue about to be named. "I assemble and "arrange my thoughts," says Epicurus, "with freedom and with "pleasure in the fresh air and open sky; and they are more lively "and vigorous and exuberant when I catch them as I walk about, "and commune with them in silence and seclusion."

study of Plato's writings had been such as to substitute, almost necessarily, small critical objections for a larger and wiser appreciation. He had been so bent, he once told me, upon finding for himself what there was in the famous philosopher, that he went daily for several weeks or months into the Magliabechian library at Florence, and, refreshing his neglected Greek, read the whole of the dialogues in the original from beginning to end. I was no longer surprised at the result, though nothing more was said. Nevertheless, there are amazingly fine things put into Plato's mouth. There is one where he accounts for our not seeing the stars at eventide, oftener because there are glimmerings of light than because there are clouds intervening. "Thus many "truths escape us from the obscurity we stand in; "but many more from that crepuscular state of mind "which induceth us to sit down satisfied with our ima- "ginations and unsuspicious of our knowledge." But this sets the wrath of Diogenes in motion all the same. "Keep always to the point, or with an eye upon it," he retorts; "and instead of saying things to make people "stare and wonder, say what will withhold them here- "after from wondering and staring. This is philoso- "phy; to make remote things tangible, common things "extensively useful, useful things extensively common, "and to leave the least necessary for the last." Of the sayings having personal reference, some may be even the more interesting and better worth quoting for the fact that nothing personal was intended by them. As, where the remark occurs that great men too often have greater faults than little men can find room for; where it is said of Aristotle that he makes you learn more than he teaches, and whenever he presents to his readers one full-blown thought there are several buds about it which

are to open in the cool of the study; where it is claimed for every great writer that he is a writer of history, let him treat on almost what subject he may, for that he carries with him for thousands of years a portion of his times; and where Diogenes prefigures the fate of all such enlighteners of the earth. "The sun colours the "sky most deeply and most diffusely when he hath "sunk below the horizon; and they who never said, "How beneficently he shines! say at last, How brightly "he set!"

Such sayings might be yet more largely added from the last of these Greek dialogues, the Epicurus, Leontion, and Ternissa; the conversation which upon the whole, I should say, was Landor's supreme favourite, and which contains certainly more of those points of character that constituted the weakness as well as the strength of his own, than any other in the entire series. When Epicurus describes as dearest to him "those whose "hearts possess the rarest and divinest faculty of retaining or forgetting at option what ought to be forgotten "or retained," it cannot but occur to us, after experience thus far of the life set down in these pages, that the faculty has in it also something not divine, and that to forget at option what ought (perhaps) to be remembered is at the least a doubtful Epicurean virtue. The entire subject of the dialogue is the platonic intercourse of the philosopher with two handsome young girls of twenty and sixteen, to whom he shows his newly-planted garden two or three miles from Athens, and explains while he practises the precepts of his philosophy. Of the safe applicability of the precepts at every season, my earlier narrative would hardly be a happy illustration; and of the trouble not inseparable from such charming friends, its closing page will have something to say; but in this place

mention has only to be made of the poetical wealth of the dialogue throughout, of the freshness of its pictures of external nature, of the delicacy of its criticism, of the wonderful beauty of many of its fancies and thoughts. Here is the saying that "the voice comes deepest from "the sepulchre, and a great name has its root in the "dead body." Here counsel is given to the young to pay a reverence to greatness both in rulers and writers, but to adjust it always by the consideration that the benefits of the one are local and transitory, while those of the other are universal and eternal. And here the philosopher of pleasure vindicates the serene endurance and triumph of philosophy over any weapons that can be brought against her. "There are nations, it is reported, "which aim their arrows and javelins at the sun and "moon on occasions of eclipse or any other offence; "but I have never heard that the sun and moon abated "their course through the heavens for it, or looked more "angrily when they issued forth again to shed light "on their antagonists. They went onward all the while "in their own serenity and clearness, through unob- "structed paths, without diminution and without de- "lay; it was only the little world below that was in "darkness."

The five Roman conversations were, Marcellus and Hannibal, Metellus and Marius, Tiberius and Vipsania, Epictetus and Seneca, and Lucullus and Cæsar: the three first named taking high rank in the class which I have set apart as prose-poems. In the first the conqueror of Syracuse lies with his death-wound before Hannibal, whose way it has cleared to Rome; in the second the tribune Metellus and the centurion Caius Marius meet at the siege of Numantia; and the third is that meeting after their divorce of Tiberius and Vip-

sania which can hardly fail to affect the most careless reader with something of the emotion its writer underwent in composing it.* The eternal protest of every age against the sacrifice of human hearts to state convenience or policy, seems to rise with the cry of anguish of the unhappy prince, as he thinks of the contentment and quiet that might have been his "though the palace "of Cæsars cracked and split with emperors, while I, "sitting in idleness on a cliff of Rhodes, eyed the Sun "as he swang his golden censer athwart the heavens, "or his image as it overstrode the sea." The Epictetus and Seneca is one of the shorter dialogues, but very striking in its contrasts as well of the character as of the philosophy of the high-bred man of learning and the low-born slave, and enforcing admirable rules of simplicity and naturalness in writing. The most generally interesting of all these Latin dialogues however, and most deservedly Southey's favourite, was the Lucullus and Cæsar. The period chosen is when estrangement has begun between Cæsar and Pompeius, the former indeed only veiling, under a visit to his friend for the professed object of seeing his new villa on the Apennines, a very eager purpose of reawakening the old dislike of Lucullus to Pompeius, in the hope of thereby obtaining sanction to his own designs. In this he is baffled. From the conqueror of Mithridates, and old adversary of the extreme republicans, he receives only counsel to be content with his victories and a warning to make no attempt on the republic; experience having taught himself the hollowness of ambition, and luxury extinguished its last vestige in him. Fain would he persuade Cæsar that enough for the immortality he craved was already achieved by him, and that

* See ante, pp. 146-149.

they who now refused him his place would have to yield it hereafter. "No one can measure a great man "but upon his bier." Cæsar silently retains his own resolve; moved greatly, but not diverted from it, when Lucullus turns to the infirmities and passions of his own career, and enforces not without self-reproach the lesson they have taught him. "There is enough in "us to be divided into two portions: let us keep the "upper undisturbed and pure. A part of Olympus "itself lies in dreariness and in clouds, variable and "stormy; but it is not the highest: there the Gods "govern." In the rest of the conversation the friends are merely host and guest; Lucullus enjoying Cæsar's admiration of the completeness of the equipments of his villa, as he is led through its various offices and halls to where its frescoes reproduce his victories, and to the chamber where their banquet waits them. Everything that may be supposed to form part of the daily life of the most luxurious of Romans in the last years of the republic is reproduced with a vivid reality. Even the farm, the cows, the lake, the fishponds, the Adriatic itself visible from that height of the Apennines, all of them as much adjuncts to the local truth of the scene as the tapestries and pictures in the hall or the marble statues in the library, take their place in the little drama presented to us in this delightful conversation. "What "a library is here!" exclaims Cæsar. "Ah, Marcus "Tullius! I salute thy image. Why frownest thou "upon me? collecting the consular robe and uplift-"ing the right arm, as when Rome stood firm again "and Catiline fled before thee."

Such was the new series of Imaginary Conversations, of which it only remains that I should indicate the dates and forms of publication. Twenty of the dia-

logues were issued as a third volume of the original series, one of them (partly in verse) on Inez de Castro being subsequently withdrawn to form portion of a dramatic poem with that title; and this volume, with a dedication to Bolivar of the date of 1825 and a postscript supplied in 1827, was published by Mr. Colburn in 1828. Fifteen more formed the first volume of a new series, which a second volume of twelve more completed; one of the latter that had Peleus and Thetis for its speakers, in violation of the rule to exclude imaginary people, being afterwards transformed into a scene which is acted in the Epicurus and Leontion; and this "second series," its first volume dedicated in May 1826 to Sir Robert Wilson and its second in August 1826 to Lord Guildford, was published by Mr. Duncan in 1829, the year to which my narrative has arrived.

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I have stated on a former page that what Julius Hare had done for the first and second it devolved on me to do for the third series of the *Imaginary Conversations;* and as, out of these, eighteen had been completed, and eight more were partially written, before Landor left Italy, I will here mention what the subjects of them were.

Five were classical. In two, forming a bright little prose poem, shaded with touches of character of the utmost delicacy and pathos, Æsop and Rhodope are the speakers. In a third, spoken over the fall of Carthage, and rising to even a grander theme in the immeasurable services of Greece to Rome, the speakers are Scipio and his Greek friends Panætius and Polybius. In the fourth, Pisistratus receives from Solon counsel and commiseration. In the fifth, where Lucian and Timotheus converse, and nearly every sentence is radiant with wisdom or wit, the great Greek satirist warns one of the leaders of the new Christian sect against the errors under which the old Gods had perished.

Fourteen had for their speakers people famous in foreign lands. The East supplied one in Rhadamistus and Zenobia, a

brief dialogue of intense passion: to which character belonged also a subject from Spain, Philip the Second and Donna Juana Coelho; one from France, Joan of Orleans and Agnes Sorel; and three from Italy, Tancredi and Constantia, Tasso and Cornelia, Dante with his wife Gemma Donati, and Dante with his angel Beatrice. Galileo visited in his prison by Milton is the subject of a seventh; the eighth, filled also with pleasant memories of Florence and Fiesole, was a dialogue between the painter Fra Filippo Lippi and Pope Eugenius the Fourth; and La Rochefoucault talking to La Fontaine supplied the ninth, both speakers talking so well that one would hardly suspect the writer to have hated the first of these Frenchmen almost as much as he loved the second. The German subjects were three: Melancthon in colloquy with Calvin; and Sandt conversing with Kotzebue on the eve of the commission of his crime, and with Blucher while afterwards in prison waiting his punishment. The thirteenth and fourteenth, Cardinal Legate Albani and the Picture-dealers, and the Emperor of China and his minister, formed portions respectively of two sets of papers, on High and Low life in Italy, and on the Adventures of a Chinese statesman despatched to Europe for a batch of first-rate professors of Christianity, with whose help his master, profiting by experience of the Jesuits, hopes to sow among his enemies the Tartars divisions and animosities that will destroy them.

The last six were on English themes, all of them dialogues of character, interfused with intense passion in that where Mary of Scotland surrenders herself to Bothwell: and, in the rest, where the English Mary and her sister Elizabeth meet after their brother's death and the proclamation of Lady Jane; where the queen Elizabeth talks, after the massacre of Bartholomew, with Cecil and Anjou and the French Ambassador; where Bishop Shipley says adieu to Franklin after his mission of peace has failed; where Addison meets Steele after the bailiffs have been with him; and where Andrew Marvel after a visit to Milton meets Bishop Parker in Bunhill-row,—showing at their very best Landor's humour and eloquence, his play of wit and fancy. The last has, perhaps more than any, the greatest qualities of his writing consistently sustained, at their highest level and with the fewest drawbacks.

# BOOK SIXTH.

1829–1835. ÆT. 54–60.

## AT FIESOLE.

I. *Closing Years in the Palazzo Medici.* II. *Mother's Death.* III. *Ordered to quit Tuscany.* IV. *The Villa Gherardescha.* V. *England revisited.* VI. *Again in Italy: Old Pictures and New Friends.* VII. *Examination of Shakespeare for Deer-stealing.* VIII. *Pericles and Aspasia.* IX. *Self-banishment from Fiesole.*

### I. Closing Years in the Palazzo Medici.

"From France to Italy my steps I bent,
And pitcht at Arno's side my household tent.
Six years the Medicæan palace held
My wandering Lares; then they went afield,
Where the hewn rocks of Fiesole impend
O'er Doccia's dell, and fig and olive blend.
There the twin streams in Affrico unite,
One dimly seen, the other out of sight,
But ever playing in his smoothen'd bed
Of polisht stone, and willing to be led
Where clustering vines protect him from the sun,
Never too grave to smile, too tired to run.
Here, by the lake, Boccaccio's fair brigade
Beguiled the hours, and tale for tale repaid.
How happy! O, how happy had I been
With friends and children in this quiet scene!
Its quiet was not destined to be mine:
'Twas hard to keep, 'twas harder to resign."

So wrote Landor, in a little poem on his homes; but the Medicæan palace had not held his Lares five years when he moved into the country two miles from the Tuscan capital, and interposed the villa Castiglione between his homes in Florence and Fiesole. Here he lived, with a short interval in the winter of '28 and '29 at the casa

Giugni, until he found his Fiesolan home. A characteristic incident had closed his intercourse with the living representative of the Medici. "I remember one day," writes Mr. Kirkup, "when he lived in the Medici palace, he "wrote to the marquis, and accused him of having "seduced away his coachman. The marquis, I should "tell you, enjoyed no very good name, and this had ex- "asperated Landor the more. Mrs. Landor was sitting "in the drawing-room the day after, where I and some "others were, when the marquis came strutting in "without removing his hat. But he had scarcely "advanced three steps from the door when Landor "walked up to him quickly and knocked his hat off, "then took him by the arm and turned him out. "You should have heard Landor's shout of laughter "at his own anger when it was all over, inextinguish- "able laughter which none of us could resist. Im- "mediately after he sent the marquis warning by the "hands of a policeman, which is reckoned an affront, "and quitted his house at the end of the year." This anecdote is also told me in the letter of a family connection who passed some time at the Italian villa,* and who, after remarking that the frequent outbreaks in Landor of this intensely sensitive pride astounded the Italians more than anything, says truly enough that the secret of it was not the vulgar sense of importance attached to his position as an English gentleman, but the vast ever-present conviction of the infinity of his mental superiority. "The smallest unintentional appearance of "slight from a superior in rank would at any moment

* Mr. Edward Wilson Landor, a cousin of the Landors of Rugeley, now a police-magistrate in Perth (Western Australia), from whom, in September 1867, when the whole of my first volume had been printed off for more than two months, I received the letter above referred to.

" rouse him into a fury of passion, never thoroughly " allayed till its last force had spent itself in an epi- " gram." Such incidents, at the worst never fraught with much gravity, often took even a highly-amusing turn, in his earlier years in Italy, from his imperfect acquaintance with the language; and here this letter confirms what was said in a former page. "Though at " last he understood it thoroughly, and spoke it with " the utmost grammatical correctness and elegance, he " acquired it with less facility than might have been ex- " pected. Mrs. Landor, without any study, could con- " verse in it with ease and volubility long before her " husband. When Southey visited them in Italy, al- " though well acquainted with French and Italian, he " showed himself a self-taught linguist, and his hearers " were not a little amused at his oddities of pronuncia- " tion and speech."

It was in the palazzo Medici that Hazlitt visited Landor in the spring of 1825. " I perfectly remember Haz- " litt's being here," writes Mr. Kirkup. " He wished " to pay Landor a visit, but was advised not, unless " he was well introduced. Armitage Brown, who was " Landor's greatest friend here, offered him a letter; " but Hazlitt said he would beard the lion in his den, " and he walked up to his house one winter's morning " in nankeen shorts and white stockings; was made " much of by the royal animal; and often returned " —at night; for Landor was much out in the day, " in all weathers." My Australian correspondent confirms this story on the relation of Mrs. Landor, describing the great critic's garb as " a dress-coat and nankeen " trousers halfway up his legs, leaving his stockings well " visible over his shoes: but his host," Mr. Wilson Landor adds, "would not know whether he was dressed in

" black or white. He wore his own clothes, like Do-
" minie Sampson, until they would hardly hold together;
" and when he visited his sisters at Warwick they used
" to resort to the expedient practised upon the dominie,
" and leave new garments for him at his bedside, which
" he would put on without discovering the change."

In that there is overcolouring, but the frequent absence of mind could not be exaggerated; and I remember one such amusing instance of forgetfulness which perhaps originated the story, since it certainly led to the necessity at Warwick of supplying him with other clothes than his own. He had been so much put out at one of his visits by having left the key of his portmanteau behind him, that his sister was hardly surprised to see him, when next he appeared at her house, eagerly flourishing in his hand an uplifted key, at once knowing this to be his comforting assurance to her that any possible repetition of the former trouble had been guarded against. Storms of laughter followed from him as she expressed her satisfaction; and the last of his successive peals had scarcely subsided, when, inquiry being made for his portmanteau, the fatal discovery presented itself that to bring only a key was more of a disaster than to bring only a portmanteau. On this occasion the portmanteau had been left at Cheltenham.*

" He was so frequently absorbed in his own reflec-
" tions," continues his relative, " as to be unconscious of

* It was in 1843. He wrote to me at the time: " My portmanteau
" and all my clothes were left behind at Cheltenham, *against all my*
" *precautions*. The worst is the loss of much poetry and prose written
" in the last three months. I am not such a fool as to trouble my
" head about the clothes, nor wise enough not to trouble it about the
" pages. However, I never look after a loss a single moment:

' Quod vides perisse, perditum ducas,'

" says Catullus and say I."

" external objects, which indeed seldom much affected " him. He would walk about Bath, as between Flor- " ence and Fiesole, with his eyes fixed on the ground, " taking no heed of the world around him. I have " known him to travel from London into Denbigh- " shire and be quite unable to say by which route he " had travelled, what towns he had passed by, or " whether or not he had come through Birmingham." My own experience also confirms this;* and some sentences from the same letter may illustrate some former pages† which were printed off some months before it reached me. " The extravagant opinion of his own " mental preëminence was formed early in life, and " remained with him in old age. Often as he changed " his estimates of contemporaries, according as they rose " or fell in his personal regard, this estimate never " changed. He looked upon himself as superior to " everybody else, and was angry with titles because " they disputed his higher title. He was an enthu- " siastic friend; and as far as sound, violence, and " unmeasured denunciation went, a bitter hater; but " beyond unsparing vituperation, he would not have in- " jured an enemy. He would certainly not have lent " a hand to crush him. It was the strong whom he " always rushed to attack. With all the violence of " his dislikes and likings, he had also the softness and " tenderness of the poetic temperament. He was pas-

* And worse. He would find himself at Birmingham when he ought to have been elsewhere. " You will wonder what I had to do " at Birmingham!" he wrote to me in the summer of 1844, explaining a hasty letter sent me the previous day with that post-mark. " Why! " just nothing at all. I should have changed trains at Coventry for " Leamington, but the fools never cried out a word about that sta- " tion."

† Ante, i. 485-512.

" sionately fond of young children. He was generous " to profusion whenever he had the means. He had " a warm feeling for all men of literature, and would " have nurtured genius in whatever obscure nook found " lurking. Self-satisfied under all circumstances, he " was without personal ambition or the desire of ag- " grandisement. His own conception of himself was " too elevated to permit of his descending to ordinary " meannesses. He neither desired money, beyond what " the necessities of the hour demanded, nor rank, nor " influence. The men he admired were men of genius " and talent, not men of station. He neither observed " nor cared whether they came in carriages or afoot; " and indeed pushed very nearly to affectation (a weak- " ness he would have repelled with scorn) this indiffer- " ence to factitious distinctions. He noticed a man's " appearance as little as he studied his own."

What is pleasantest here, as well as most material, receives further confirmation in the letters of Mr. Kirkup, and testimonies thus independent of each other will not be thought unimportant. "I first knew him in 1824 " through Mr. Armitage Brown, the great friend of Keats, " and the most intimate and confidential friend of Lan- " dor for many years. Among his associates then, and " until he quitted his villa, was an elderly gentleman " named Leckie, very jocose and satirical, whom Landor " liked as much as his wife disliked him. Another friend " was Mr. MacDonnell, well known to all residents here. " Another was an old retired painter who had lived in " Italy through the war, really an Englishman I believe, " but some said an American, and like Leckie a great " Voltairian.* Landor said he was above a hundred, and " he must have lived to 117 if that was correct. Two

* See ante, i. 12.

" other painter-friends of his were the Wallis-es, father
" and son, likewise old residents; the elder of whom he
" characterised as telling white lies better as well as of-
" tener than any man living. I recollect Landor having a
" dispute with Wallis about a picture he had bought and
" as usual christened a Correggio, which ended by his
" exclaiming, 'The only proof *I* want that it is, is that
" Wallis should say it is not.' Landor lived economically
" and dressed very shabbily. He only indulged in buy-
" ing a number of very ancient pictures which were not
" esteemed at that time. He told me he had left all
" his own affairs to the care of his brother (Henry) and
" his agent, on their promise that they should never
" send him any account, for he hated the sight of
" figures. And they kept their word, so that he never
" knew what he was to have. He was always eccentric.
" He never would look at a review, and lived without
" books, or nearly so. His memory was most astonish-
" ing, and he used to boast that he could always quote
" securely from it; but he trusted too much to it some-
" times, and made mistakes. His strength was lan-
" guage, Latin and English; and his passion was
" painting—another language; but he was not learned
" in that. As for sciences he knew nothing of them,
" and made no pretence of caring for them. He used
" to turn my experiments in spiritualism to a joke,
" and never thought it worth while to examine it. One
" day, talking against the church-establishment in Ire-
" land, Leckie called it tyranny and plunder, and said
" that every man should pay for his own humbug.
" 'To be sure,' put in Landor; 'and roman-catholic
" 'priests might then be able to take to wearing stock-
" 'ings like protestants, and then they'd all start fair.'
" He was fond of his children to excess at this time.

" I had a study in my room, which I made at Parma
" from Correggio: it was the profile of the angel in
" the famous picture of St. Jerome for which Louis
" Dixhuit vainly tempted Marie Louise, in her sorest
" poverty, by the offer of a million francs to allow it
" to remain in the Louvre; and this angel, Landor
" thought so like his Arnold in those days of his boy-
" hood, that I made a drawing of the little fellow in
" the same view, and gave it to his father. He was
" delighted; and with his usual generosity sent me
" a little noble landscape by Salvator, which I shall
" always value, and which now hangs in my studio
" over Shelley's bed. As I have said, Landor often
" was shabbily dressed, and I have known servants
" offend him by taking him for a beggar or poor devil.
" He had the reputation of being a violent man, and
" no doubt was so. But I never saw anything but the
" greatest gentleness and courtesy in him, especially to
" women. He was chivalresque of the old school. At
" Lord Dillon's in Florence we used to meet often, and
" there we together made the acquaintance of Lamar-
" tine. Landor was much attached to Lord Dillon, in
" spite of his being a poet; for he was always reciting,
" and people laughed at him. Not so Landor. He
" showed the most courteous attention; and often gave
" him a word of advice, so gently as never to offend
" him. He used to say that Lord Dillon's smiling
" handsome fair face was like a ray of sunshine in Flor-
" ence."

Writing more than forty years ago of the time which happily is thus with Mr. Kirkup still a living memory, Leigh Hunt has left us his description also of some of the Landor circle. In Mr. Brown, the friend of Keats, whom he first visited while he occupied a little convent by Fie-

sole, he found an amount of joviality that might have represented the entire body corporate of the former pious possessors of his abode; in Mr. Kirkup he discovered a man unequalled for generosities, and for delicacy in showing them; and in Lord Dillon he saw the ideal of a romantic Irish lord, with much depth of understanding as well as humanity of knowledge, and with an exuberance of temperament more than national. Perhaps it was this latter characteristic that Hazlitt more bluntly described to Captain Medwin, when telling him afterwards of the civilities of Landor and his friends at Florence, and among them of a dinner at Lord Dillon's. "It was the first time I had dined with a lord; and by "gad, sir, he had all the talk to himself. He never "waited for an answer. He talks as much as Cole-"ridge; only he doesn't pump it out."

Something of Hazlitt's own talk at Landor's table is among the passages of Mr. Kirkup's letter I have some hesitation in using; but as the details of his Scotch divorce, including the surprising diaries of the first Mrs. Hazlitt, have lately been published with family authority,* there will perhaps be no harm in saying that as Hazlitt's present continental journey was in the nature of a holiday wedding-trip with his second wife, whose small independence had enabled him to give himself that unusual enjoyment, he appears to have had no scruple in dilating to his friends on those facilities of Scottish law which had opened to him such advantages. "He related to Landor, Brown, and myself one day "the history of his own divorce. He told us that he "and his wife, having always some quarrel going on, "determined at last, from incompatibility of temper,

* See *Memoirs of William Hazlitt*, by W. Carew Hazlitt, vol. ii. pp. 21-65.

" to get separated. So, to save Mrs. H.'s honour, and " have all their proceedings legal, they went to work " in this way. They took the steamboat to Leith, pro- " vided themselves each with good law advice, and " continued on the most friendly terms in Edinburgh " till everything was ready: when Hazlitt described " himself calling in from the streets a not very re- " spectable female confederate, and, for form's sake, " putting her in his bed, and lying down beside her. " 'Well, sir,' said Hazlitt, turning more particularly " to Landor, who had by this time thrown out signs of " the most lively interest, 'down I lay, and the folding- " 'doors opened, and in walked Mrs. H. accompanied by " 'two gentlemen. She turned to them, and said: Gen- " 'tlemen, do you know who that person is in that bed " 'along with that woman? Yes, madam, they politely " 'replied, 'tis Mr. William Hazlitt. On which, sir, " 'she made a curtsey, and they went out of the room, " 'and left me and my companion *in statu quo*. She " 'and her witnesses then accused me of adultery, sir, " 'and obtained a divorce against me, which, by gad, sir, " 'was a benefit to both.'" Mr. Kirkup takes occasion to add, that as he and Brown were never married, they could hardly be expected to listen during the progress of this tale of wonder with the eager anxiety, or to hail its conclusion with the irrepressible delight, evinced by Landor; but they were all not a little surprised, and till then quite ignorant that such beneficial uses were to be made of the law.

Landor himself too, in a letter to me nearly fourteen years ago,* described another piece of talk of Hazlitt's on

* He was reading De Quincey's *Recollections* at the time (23d Oct. 1854): "De Quincey gives a description of Wordsworth's figure and " physiognomy. He represents him in youth as like Milton. I can-

the first evening of their meeting in Italy, by which he was startled a little. They fell first upon the subject of poetry; and Landor, expressing much admiration of Wordsworth, said he had a strong desire to see him. "Well, sir," said Hazlitt, "you never saw him, then? "But you have seen a horse, I suppose?" Landor smiled, and he went on. "Well, sir, if you have seen "a horse, I mean his head, sir, you may say you have "seen Wordsworth." It should be added, however, that the poet's face had been a sore subject with Hazlitt ever since his luckless attempt to paint it twenty years before, when Southey had described the result as presenting Wordsworth at the foot of the gallows, deeply affected by his deserved fate, yet determined to die like a man. "Hazlitt in those days," Wordsworth afterwards wrote, "was practising portrait-painting with "professional views;" and thus, at one of his first ventures, the ambitious young limner had stumbled on the threshold. The face had something in it, then, above and beyond the power the painter possessed of dealing with it: a severe worn pressure of thought about the temples, a fire in the eye as if more than outward appearances were seen by it, the forehead intensely marked, cheeks furrowed by strong feeling, and an inclination to laughter about the mouth strangely at variance with

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"not but laugh over my paper on the recollection of Hazlitt, the first "evening he visited me at Florence." He tells the story in the text, and adds: "And certainly, when I did afterwards see him, I "found the physiognomy to be equine. But W. had a very fine fore-"head: very broad, though somewhat heavy. There are few indica-"tions in the forehead, however. I would not say *nulla fides:* but "one of the emptiest heads I ever met with was a man's so exactly "Erskine, that you might look at both together, and doubt which "was which; and I once saw a postillion at La Cava as exactly like "Napoleon."

the solemn look of the rest of the countenance. Of all which there was nothing the critic cared to remember now but his early failure to do justice to any of it; nor could Landor himself have disposed with greater coolness or cleverness of a subject become displeasing to him. There was just enough truth to give humour to his whimsical comparison.

Many were the points of agreement, indeed, between Hazlitt and his host; and so heartily did each enjoy the other's wilfulness and caprice, that a strong personal liking characterised their brief acquaintance.* Landor wrote to him after he left Florence, and Hazlitt replied from Rome at the beginning of April. He described himself and Mrs. Hazlitt crossing the mountains pretty well, but their journey as rather tedious. Rome had hardly answered his expectations. The ruins did not prevail enough over the modern buildings, which were commonplace things, to satisfy him: but one or two things were "prodigious fine." He had got a pleasant lodging, but found everything very bad and dear. "I "have thoughts of going to spend a month at Albano, "but am not quite sure. If I do not, I shall return to "Florence next week, and proceed to Venice. I should "be glad, if I settle at Albano, if you could manage to

* In his *Recollections of Hazlitt* Mr. Patmore tells us: "Of Lan- "dor Hazlitt entertained a very high opinion, even before the pro- "duction of his noble work, the *Imaginary Conversations;* . . . but "his intimate connexion and friendship with Southey . . . seemed "to throw a doubt on the sincerity, as well as the stability, of the "opinions of both. . . . He was not answerable, he told me, for the "whole of the article on Landor in the *Edinburgh Review*, altera- "tions and additions having been made in it after it left his hands. ". . . The book was one after his own heart; and some parts of it he "considered finer than anything else from a modern pen. . . . Sub- "sequently Hazlitt was formally introduced to Landor at his resi- "dence at Florence; and he returned to England with an improved "and heightened opinion," &c. &c.

" come over and stop a little. I have done what I was " obliged to write for the papers, and am now a leisure " man, I hope, for the rest of the summer.* I bought " a little Florence edition of Petrarch and Dante the " other day, and have made out one page." He devotes the rest of his letter to a Latin inscription copied by him from the monument to the Stuarts executed as a commission from the Prince-regent by Canova;† requests that Landor will "ask Mr. Southey for his opi- " nion on this Jacobite effusion;" and, sending a kind remembrance to Landor's wife, subscribes himself his much-obliged friend.

Such few notices as thus were accessible of friends and life in Florence it seemed right to interpose before resumption of my narrative, at the opening of the year of the removal to Fiesole; and I will now only add a note or two from Leigh Hunt's recollection of Landor himself at the time. He found him living among his paintings and hospitalities, in a style of unostentatious elegance very becoming a scholar that could afford it, but with a library the smallness of which surprised Hunt, and "which he must furnish out, when he writes " on English subjects, by the help of a rich memory." He had some fine children, Leigh goes on to say, with whom it was his habit to play like a real schoolboy; being as ready to complain of an undue knock as he was

* In another letter (dating from 33 Via Gregoriana) he wrote: " I am much gratified that you are pleased with the *Spirit of the Age*. " Somebody ought to like it, for I am sure there will be plenty to cry " out against it. I hope you did not find any sad blunders in the " second volume; but you can hardly suppose the depression of body " and mind under which I wrote some of those articles."

† JACOBO III. JACOBI II. MAGNÆ BRIT. REGIS FILIO, KAROLO EDVARDO, ET HENRICO DECANO PATRUM CARDINALIUM, JACOBI III. FILIIS, REGLÆ STIRPIS STUARDIÆ POSTREMIS, ANNO M.VCCC.XIX. BEATI MORTUI QUI IN DOMINO MORIUNTUR.

to laugh, shout, and scramble himself. His conversation was lively and unaffected, as full of scholarship or otherwise as his friends might desire, and dashed now and then with a little superfluous will and vehemence, when speaking of his likings and dislikes. "His laugh "was in peals, and climbing; he seemed to fetch every "fresh one from a higher story." Both his genius and scholarship greatly impressed his visitor. He could really fancy and feel with, as well as read, Ovid and Catullus. He had the veneration for all poetry, ancient or modern, that belonged to a scholar who was himself a poet; and showed a proper knowledge of Chaucer and of Spenser as well as of Homer. He seemed to Hunt, by his book of Idyls, to have proved himself to be by far the best Latin poet of our country, after Milton; more in good taste than the incorrectness and diffuseness of Cowley, and not to be lowered by a comparison with the mimic elegancies of Addison. "Speaking of the Latin poets of antiquity, "I was struck with an observation of his, that Ovid was "the best-natured of them all. Horace's perfection that "way he doubted. He said that Ovid had a greater "range of pleasurable ideas, and was prepared to do "justice to everything that came in his way. Ovid "was fond of noticing his rivals in wit and genius, "and has recorded the names of a great number of "his friends; whereas Horace seems to confine his "eulogies to such as were rich or in fashion and "well received at court." Upon the whole, what Leigh Hunt had to say of this remarkable man, with whose poetry he had become acquainted but the year before, after reading the book that had made him suddenly famous as "one of our most powerful writers of prose," is to be summed up in a remark already referred to. He had never known anyone of such a vehement nature with

so great delicacy of imagination: "he is like a stormy "mountain-pine that should produce lilies."

## II. Mother's Death.

At the opening of 1829 there seemed to be less cause for anxiety as to his mother's health than had been expressed for some preceding years. Her letters had never been more frequent, and seldom more shrewdly or strikingly expressed. On the 7th of January she thanks him for the portrait of his two beautiful children; says how proud she is of what Mr. Southey in one of his books had been saying of her son; tells him of a living she had purchased for his brother Robert near Pershore, "in a pleasant country, and not far from "Ipsley;" and adds that her daughters have been reading to her what had pleased her very much out of Bishop Heber's Journal,* where his name was mentioned, and some of his poetry quoted. On the 19th of March there is a letter from her filled with county news about the Lawleys, and with what was going on at Warwick-castle and at Guy's-cliff; telling how much Sir Robert Lawley had lamented "Walter's "unwillingness" to see more of him in Florence, and what handsome things Lord Aston had said of the author of the *Imaginary Conversations*. In May she reports of her grandson Charles that he was in the fifth class at Rugby, and that the new master there was said to have wonderful influence; that the boys worked very hard to gain his approbation; and that flogging and fagging were nearly abolished altogether. This was Arnold. However, the old lady adds, "I hope the

* Heber says that the vast ruins of old cities in Upper India had brought to his mind the lines of *Gebir* on Masar. Ante, i. 95-96.

" boys won't study more than is good for the health " of them, and I did not like to hear that the play- " ground is deserted." That was her last letter to her son in Florence, though she lived until the October following. She had an illness somewhat suddenly in the spring, from which she never quite rallied; and through the intervening months it is discoverable that she was becoming gradually weaker, though no immediate danger was thought to exist.

Landor continued to write to her as usual. He complained to her in January how much people had beset him with introductions since his *Conversations* appeared, and why it was that the last series was still delayed. However, it would really be out at the end of March; and she would find that he had mentioned his kind old friend Dr. Parr with the regard and gratitude he owed him. He writes to her in June of the pleasantest weather he can remember in Italy, and asks her to tell his sister to send him various fruit-seeds. He tells her a few days later that she was not to be alarmed by anything she heard of his having been expelled from Florence, because he was back again; and the grand-duke had only laughed when he heard that the real offence had been what he had said in his book of Florentine patriots and Florentine justice, and of one of the Florentine grandees selling his old wife's clothes before she had been dead a fortnight. And at the end of July he informs her of his great misfortune in the death by apoplexy of his friend Lord Blessington at Paris, from his eulogy of whom I will take a few lines.

" When he was Viscount Mountjoy he was very much noticed by the present King, who, in bringing his charges against the Queen, said, ' I hope I shall find in Blessington as warm a friend ' as I found in Mountjoy.' He replied that he was afraid the

prosecution would make the Regent unpopular, and that he never could be the advocate of a measure that might lead to recrimination. We thought differently on many points, particularly on the political abilities and integrity of Canning. But nothing could diminish our mutual esteem."*

This must have been the last letter his mother received from him. He sent her over his bust by Gibson at the end of August; but the letter accompanying it was to his sisters. In this he told them to explain to her that it was the gift of his incomparable friend Ablett, whom they were to describe to her as a most religious man, who gave away many thousands a year to persons who had no suspicion from whom it came; and this was replied to by his sister Ellen, who said the bust had arrived without the slightest injury, that it was beautiful and much admired, and that Lord Aston in particular was delighted with it. She added that they were in the midst of gaieties; that the Studley-castle people were staying with them; that they

* From one of Lord Blessington's letters, out of many kept by Landor, I take a few lines to show the character of their intercourse, and the subjects that had interest for both. "You will be surprised "to hear that Benjamin Constant and two of his party have been at "a card-party of his most Christian Majesty. So that I think his "most Catholic Majesty will be left in the lurch; and that the Cross "will triumph over the Crescent. But everything else political now "gives way to the new administrations of England and France. Lord "Lansdowne, they say, will be foreign secretary, and Lord Holland "privy seal. The bar is not pleased by the appointment of Plunket "to the Rolls with a peerage, but he will be a fine make-weight against "Eldon in the next debate upon our Irish question. They talk of Lord "Mount Charles coming here. I think he will be vice-chamberlain. "Sir John Leach will not go to Ireland. He is wrong, for he would "do well there, and find excellent claret as well as pretty women, "both of which, on dit, his honour has no objection unto. On Tues-"day the 15th Lord Normanby plays *The Iron Chest*. I do not know "yet whether I shall come over for it or not. I love plays so much "that I think I shall."

had had a succession of archery meetings; and that their mother had just returned from Ipsley, "very "feeble, but insisting on the gaieties going on." This was on the 8th of September, and is the last glimpse of her, brave and self-denying to the close, which we are permitted to receive. She died in October, within one month of her 86th year.* "My mother's great kind- "ness to me," Landor wrote on the 12th of November to his sister Elizabeth, "throughout the whole course of "her life, made me perpetually think of her with the "tenderest love. I thank God that she did not suffer "either a painful or a long illness, and that she de- "parted from life quite sensible of the affectionate "care she had received from both her daughters. I "am not sorry that she left me some token of her re- "gard; but she gave me too many in her lifetime for "me to think of taking any now. You and Ellen will "retain, for my sake, the urn and the books. I wish

* From a marble monument in Tachbrook church I take the subjoined, written mainly by Landor himself, but with additional touches by his brother Robert: "Gualterus Landor, Roberto gene- "roso, pio, integerrimo Patre natus: duas uxores duxit; a prima "filiam unicam, ab altera filios IV. filias III. suscepit; lepidus, doc- "tus, liberalis, probus, amicis jucundissimus; anno ætatis LXXIII. "decessit.—Juxta, prout vivens moriensque voluit, composita est "uxor ejus Elizabetha, filia Caroli Savagii, conjux, mater, fœmina "pia, optima, vix annos LXXXV. menses XI." "Pardon me," wrote Landor in 1856, when he sent me a copy of the inscription as originally drawn up by him: "pardon me, what I never can pardon in "myself, the use of Latin in an Englishman's epitaph, which ought "to be written for Englishmen to read. It was urged on me." An English inscription on an adjoining tablet in the same church may also here be given, though it anticipates some events in this memoir. "To the memory of Mary Anne Landor, second daughter of "Walter and Elizabeth Landor, who died December 26, 1818, aged "40 years; and of her youngest sister, Ellen Landor, who died "July 17, 1838, aged 55 years. Lastly, of Elizabeth Savage Landor, "their eldest sister, who died February 24, 1854, aged 77 years."

" to have her little silver seal, in exchange for an ori-
" ental cornelian which you and my brothers gave me,
" belonging to my father. I have his arms, which is
" enough. The one I mean is pretty in its setting,
" and contains the word 'Leitas' in Persian letters. My
" brother Henry was so kind as to purchase two Vene-
" tian paintings, once mine, and to place them at Ips-
" ley. I thanked him at the time, and thank him
" again; but I am resolved to accept nothing what-
" ever from any of my relatives. If my mother's pic-
" ture was repurchased at Llanthony, I would buy it
" gladly. Pray let me hear about it. I remember it
" at my grandmother's fifty years ago. Adieu. I am
" ill disposed for writing more."

## III. Ordered to quit Tuscany.

The incident mentioned in one of Landor's last letters to his mother might have seemed a little startling if told of any one else, but in his case made hardly a perceptible difference in his relations to the magistracy and police of Florence, with whom he had generally some quarrel in hand. Three years earlier he had written to Southey that the things said about the Tuscans in his *Conversations*, and principally those in power, being translated with bitter comments by some literary men in Florence whom he could not admit into his house, had greatly exasperated against him the ministers of the grand-duke, whom however he did not know by sight, nor they him; so that it was a matter of perfect indifference to him. The ground of indifference lasted exactly two more years, at the end of which he obtained perforce a personal acquaintance with some of the ministers, having been called before the courts, and

threatened to be sent out of Tuscany. And now, another year having intervened, this threat was to be put in force.

The circumstances will be best explained by Landor himself, who will not only relate to us the incident but all that came of it. "You will not be surprised to hear," he writes to Southey at the close of July 1829, "that I "was ordered to leave Florence, nor very much more "that I disobeyed the order. My plate was stolen by "a servant whom I had dismissed, and who left the "house before the due time had expired, taking with "him the key of the outer door. I applied to the po-"lice the next morning, telling them that I thought it "my duty, as the offence had been committed under "my roof; little as I hoped for restitution or redress. "The chief asked me in a most insolent manner, why "I presumed to say so. 'The reason, my friend, is this. "'Your master, the president of the buon governo, last "'year, when a picture of much greater value than my "'plate was purloined by a person intrusted with it, said "'that if I could not live quietly with my neighbours, "'he would send me out of Tuscany: not knowing, "'or not caring, that my application was made to the "'criminal court by order of the commissary himself, to "'whom I had referred the matter, and who thought it "'grave enough to send it, without my request or sug-"'gestion, before those judges. It is true, they did not "'find the man guilty; because the witness who con-"'signed the picture refused to give any evidence.' To "this the sbirro answered, 'The president of the buon "'governo does what he sees good.' 'Then, sir, tell "'him from me that if he does me another such act of "'injustice, and uses such threats in future, I will drag "'him by the throat before the grand-duke.' The next

" morning I had an order from the commissary to at-
" tend him. I went; and he read to me an order from
" the president to be out of Tuscany in three days.
" 'Tell the president I shall neither be out of Tuscany
" 'nor out of Florence in three days; and let him use
" 'force if he dares; I will repell it.' I wrote imme-
" diately to the grand-duke, showing him the passion
" and absurdity of this order.* When I had remained
" four days, the commissary sent to me again, and told
" me that, by asking, I might remain ten, fifteen, twenty.
" I told him I would ask nothing, and would go at my
" leisure. He then said in confidence, that if I would
" only say I *wished* to stay, I might; that it was a
" storm, and would blow over. I discovered that all
" the ministers were outrageous that I applied to the
" grand-duke and not to them." I may here interpose that Landor's statement on this point is borne out by the letters kept among his papers having reference to the incident; and from which I also find that actual personal intercession with Corsini, on Landor's behalf but without his knowledge, had been made by Lord Normanby, Sir Robert Lawley, and Mr. St. John. "He called a council,
" and was himself the only one in my favour. He told

* A translated copy of this letter, dated 15th April 1829, will be found in the characteristic series of papers on *High and Low Life in Italy* contributed by Landor to a periodical edited by Leigh Hunt; and as I have mentioned these, I will add that in the course of them, where Mr. Tallboys cautions his son as to marriage, there is a remark very profoundly impressive in its meaning and its moral: " Death itself to the reflecting mind is less serious than marriage.
" The older plant is cut down that the younger may have room to
" flourish: a few tears drop into the loosened soil, and buds and
" blossoms spring over it. Death is not even a blow: is not even a
" pulsation: it is a pause. But marriage unrolls the awful lot of
" numberless generations. Health, Genius, Honour are the words in-
" scribed on some; on others are Disease, Fatuity, and Infamy. Ed-
" ward, may Providence guide you either *in* this state or *from* it!"

" his secretary I might return when I would, since it " appeared I had gone to the baths of Lucca, and that " it was a *mesintelligence* that might have been avoided. " This order his ministers kept back. I did not know " it was given, and returned without it. The ministers " were astonished I returned so soon, and the secretary " that I had not returned much sooner. My note on " Corsini selling his wife's old clothes before she had " been dead a fortnight; that on Borghese; that on " our patriots, &c; leave me none but enemies. Such " being the case, I resolved to pitch my tent in the " midst of them; and have now bought a villa, belong- " ing to the Count Gherardescha, of the family of C. " Ugolino, and upon the spot where Boccaccio led his " women to bathe when they had left the first scene of " their story-telling. Here I shall pass my life; long " or short, no matter; but God grant without pain and " sickness, and with only such friends and such enemies " as I enjoy at present. Pray come and pass the vint- " age and winter with me—this year if possible; if " not, the next. I will give you a cool and beautiful " chapel to write and read in, and shall then be sure " that it is consecrated. Bring your son."

This invitation was renewed three months later, Landor having heard meanwhile of his mother's death. Southey had asked him (at the end of August) to discover where Madame Christophe, once queen of Hayti, was living in Florence, in order that Thomas Clarkson, who was then on a visit to him, might remit to her some hundred and fifty pounds which he much wished the poor queen to have: but Landor, replying at the beginning of November, told him that all his inquiries to find out her present residence had been fruitless, as she had left Florence three years ago, and he had written

to Bologna and to Naples, but could hear nothing. Then he proceeds: "I was going to write to you ten "days ago, when I received the very painful intelli- "gence of my poor mother's death. At eighty-five such "a loss might have been expected; and, after not see- "ing her for fifteen years, I fancied I should have been "less affected by it. But it is only by the blow itself "that early remembrances are awakened to the utter- "most. She had always been kind to me.—You do not "give me any fresh hopes of seeing you in Italy. I "am making a garden, and doing other more foolish "things. Such is building; but this is as much for "the convenience of my labourers as for mine. I am "removing all their offices from my own residence. "The Italian gentlemen are fond of pigging with them. "I cannot bear any one near me, particularly those "who leave traces of their proximity unquestionable to "eyes or nose. Whenever you come I can give you "two bedrooms and two below; so you may arrange "with Mrs. Southey, and bring such of your family as "are most inclined for Italy. I shall consider this the "most delightful event that has occurred since my "residence abroad. To-day I shall have (they tell me) "about fifteen barrels of wine, fifty-five quarts to the "barrel. They rob a tenth of it for themselves, and a "tenth for the priest. Since Peter Leopold abolished "the tithes the priests tell the contadini they will go "to the devil if they assist in such impiety; and, from "the robbery of the master, the tithes are as regularly "paid as ever. The pious rob both for priest and "themselves, being absolved in the default, and placing "the theft on the opposite page to the duty. This fact "was told me by Piamonte, formerly presidente del "buon governo."

Here again were fruitful sources of dispute with "rascally" magistrates, as well as with "pious" thieves; but on the whole, excepting for a quarrel with a neighbour about a watercourse to be presently related, and which engaged all his energies for a time, Landor lived at his new villa quietly enough for nearly six more years. He had been impressed, perhaps more than was usual with him, by Francis Hare's warning, sent when he heard of the recent banishment from Florence, that he would never find anywhere on the continent so suitable a home. Writing in August from Trinity-college, where he was staying with his brother Julius, after eager expression of his delight at hearing of Landor again in Florence, he gives him several reasons for declaring it to be the best and fittest abode for him in Europe; implores him, by all their pleasant memories of it, to contrive not to get into any fresh scrapes that might finally drive him out of it; and pronounces it to be, by all the strictest laws of social intercourse, enough for one gentleman to cane one scoundrel once in one life. Telling him, then, that his brother Augustus has just received from New-college the Wiltshire living of Alton Barnes where Crewe wrote his poem of Lewisdon Hill, he closes with an abrupt question, Why is *I* in Italics short, which Landor has answered by scratching across the page the line,

"Omnia namque Italus promittere grandia gaudet."

Soon after receiving this letter, and before yet he knew of his mother's death, Landor had written to his sister Ellen to tell her that there had appeared in Florence the dearest of all the friends he ever had or ever should have, his Ianthe of former years, now a widow of title who had buried two husbands, and remained nevertheless so handsome that an English earl and a

French duke were offering their addresses to her, in which the Frenchman was persisting in spite of all discouragement. Talk of time not going back, why, the sudden vision of this one face had rolled back from him in an instant more than twenty years! With which thought, put into verse, he closes his letter:

> "Say ye that years roll on and ne'er return?
> Say ye the sun, who leaves them all behind
> (Their great creator) cannot bring one back
> With all his force, though he draw worlds around?
> Witness me, little streams that meet before
> My happy dwelling, witness Affrico,
> And Mensola! that ye have seen at once
> Twenty roll back, twenty as swift and bright
> As are your swiftest and your brightest waves,
> When the tall cypress o'er the Doccia
> Hurls from his inmost boughs the latent snow."

The "happy dwelling" was his Fiesolan villa; his present great enjoyment of which, how he came into possession of it, and his way of life there, will be best understood from what he wrote at the time to his sisters in Warwick.

## IV. The Villa Gherardescha.

When Leigh Hunt, after many sad disappointments in Pisa and Genoa, found himself in Florence, his refuge from his troubles was to wander about Maiano, a village on the slope of one of the Fiesolan hills, two miles from the city, thinking of Boccaccio. On either side of Maiano were laid the two scenes of his *Decameron;* the little streams that embrace it, the Affrico and Mensola, were the metamorphosed lovers in his Nimphale Fiesolano; within view was his villa Gherardi, before the village the hills of Fiesole, and at its feet the Valley of the Ladies. Every spot around was an illustrious

memory. To the left, the house of Macchiavelli; still farther in that direction, nestling amid the blue hills, the white village of Settignano where Michael Angelo was born; on the banks of the neighbouring Mugnone, the house of Dante; and in the background, Galileo's villa of Arcetri and the palaces and cathedrals of Florence. In the thick of this noble landscape, forming part of the village of San Domenica di Fiesole, stood the villa which had now become Landor's. The Valley of the Ladies was in his grounds; the Affrico and the Mensola ran through them; above was the ivy-clad convent of the Doccia overhung with cypress; and from his iron entrance-gate might be seen Valdarno and Vallombrosa. Ten years after Landor had lost this home, an Englishman travelling in Italy, his friend and mine, visited the neighbourhood for his sake, drove out from Florence to Fiesole, and asked his coachman which was the villa in which the Landor family lived. "He was a dull dog, and pointed to Boccaccio's. I "didn't believe him. He was so deuced ready that I "knew he lied. I went up to the convent, which is "on a height, and was leaning over a dwarf wall "basking in the noble view over a vast range of hill "and valley, when a little peasant girl came up and "began to point out the localities. *Ecco la villa Lan-* "*dora!* was one of the first half-dozen sentences she "spoke. My heart swelled almost as Landor's would have "done when I looked down upon it, nestling among its "olive-trees and vines, and with its upper windows "(there are five above the door) open to the setting "sun. Over the centre of these there is another story, "set upon the housetop like a tower; and all Italy, "except its sea, is melted down into the glowing land-"scape it commands. I plucked a leaf of ivy from

" the convent-garden as I looked; and here it is. For " Landor. With my love." So wrote Mr. Dickens to me from Florence on the 2d of April 1845; and when I turned over Landor's papers in the same month after an interval of exactly twenty years, the ivy-leaf was found carefully enclosed, with the letter in which I had sent it.

He began the first Newyear's day (1830) passed by him in the villa Gherardescha by writing to his sisters. It had opened inauspiciously as far as weather was concerned. He had to tell them how terrible the season was out there, in what their letters were never tired of calling "sunny Italy." Owing to his living two miles from Florence, it was eight days since the children had been able to go to school, either on foot or in a carriage. The roads were covered with ice, and appeared like so many frozen cataracts. There had been for several days two woodcocks within a few yards of his door, where there was an open spring. He went on to tell them also that his mother's death had set him thinking of old times, and for several weeks there had been moving visibly before his eyes processions of the old Warwickshire faces. There was good ancient Mrs. Cook of Tachbrooke, so patient of him in his boyhood; how did she carry her many years? And yet they could not be so many, perhaps not seventy; though hers was the oldest of all living faces he remembered in his childhood. Poor Mr. and Mrs. Farmer too, with all their Christmas kindnesses to him; and the Parkhursts, the Venours, the Wades, the Welds, the Cliffords, and many beside. He may perhaps visit England another year: he has had so many invitations; and from Paris even more. "But my " country now is Italy, where I have a residence for " life, and literally may sit under my own vine and my

" own fig-tree. I have some thousands of the one and " some scores of the other; with myrtles, pomegra- " nates, oranges, lemons, gagias, and mimosas in great " quantity. I intend to make a garden not very unlike " yours at Warwick; but alas, time is wanting. I *may* " live another ten years, but do not expect it. In a few " days, whenever the weather will allow it, I have four " mimosas ready to place round my intended tomb, " and a friend who is coming to plant them." He had also the inscription ready, intimating that he should have lived enough when the tear of that friend had been dried by him; and of course his Ianthe is presumably to be taken as the lady and friend referred to. But whether the tear he was to dry was for her husbands that had been or those that were to be, does not appear; and from the recollection of a visit I once made to her with Landor some years later in Bath, I should have said that few tears at any time had troubled that still bright, easy, good-humoured Irish face.

> " Lo, where the four mimosas blend their shade
> In calm repose at last is Landor laid:
> For ere he slept he saw them planted here
> By her his soul had ever held most dear,
> And he had lived enough when he had dried her tear."

The allusion in the first of the additional notes I shall now give from his family letters is to some business arrangements necessitated by his mother's death; and the Shakespeare subscription named in it was one that Doctor Conolly, then a little-known practitioner in Warwick, afterwards famous for services to humanity, had written to interest him in.

FIESOLE: MARCH 22, 1830.

" No other means occur to me of forwarding to Florence the papers relative to the houses at Tachbrooke than the post.

The expense is of no consequence. If Henry thinks it requisite to give any money for the little interest I have in them after all he has paid for me on various occasions, I would rather it should be about five pounds for the subscription they are raising for the family that bears the name of Shakespeare, and in which it would be disgraceful if mine did not appear. He is the great glory of our country, and without any second in the universe. I dined on Sunday with Sir Robert Lawley, who gave Julia the key of his opera-box for Monday. We were going, we and three of the children, when the horses gibbed, and we were obliged to give up the scheme. In fact, the road to my house is extremely steep. We have had races here, very capital ones, they say; but I never go to such amusements. . . I have my garden very much enriched by raspberries and strawberries from France; I have also some black currants, a great treasure everywhere, and here particularly, though they grow wild in the woods of the Apennines. Arnold and Julia are strong and happy, by being perpetually in the air, and having such a garden; so have the two youngest, who are fond of transplanting flowers, but only when they are in full bloom!"

April 1830.

"I hear that Mr. Arnold, the master at Rugby, is the person most fit of any in the world for the management of a great school. He is the intimate friend of Augustus Hare. . . . By the bye, my old acquaintance Mr. Weld, who married the sister of Sir Thomas Clifford, is made a cardinal. At least I believe it is he; for I heard that on the death of his wife he became a monk, and retired into Italy. . . The weather here is changed much for the better. Some lilacs that I planted just eighteen days ago without a bud are now bursting into flower; and my gooseberries, raspberries, and black currants are in leaf. I expect to have peas by this day month, sowed on the twenty-fourth of last. The air is perfumed up to my bedroom by the mignonette thirty feet under it; indeed more before it reaches my nose, for the kitchen is ten feet and a half high, and the dining-room over is eighteen. The mezereon grows wild in all the Apennines, yet I have not been able to procure a single plant; nor of the cytisus, though it covers the banks of the river for miles."

July 1, 1830.

"Weld is not made a bishop, but a cardinal, a prince. The last time I saw his eminence was at Clifton, in his own house, where I dined with him. Sir Thomas Clifford, with whom I had been walking on the downs the day before, told me to eat of the pastry and praise it. I saw him smile, and asked him why he gave me the advice. He replied that Weld always made his own pastry, and that nothing pleased him so much as to have it praised. Indeed it was excellent. He deserved not only a cardinal's hat, but the fair hand of our good aunt Eyres. Nobody else ever equalled him in the sublimity of this science. I have lately lost at Rome one of the most intelligent and friendly of my acquaintance, Lady Northampton. She had been delivered of a child in the morning, and people in the street were complimenting Lord N. at the moment she died. On his return to the house he found her dead, remarkably well and in good spirits as he had left her three hours before; and he had gone out only to execute some little commissions she had given him, and to tell her friends how favourable had been her accouchement. She was an excellent Greek scholar, and played and sang divinely. My children are all well, and Julia much better than ever she was in her life. She is fat and strong, and always in the air. She amuses herself with her fantail pigeons, her blackbirds, and nightingales. I could not prevent the nests being taken. Three were taken before—of nightingales—which grieved me. Upon this she employed some boys to take the fourth nest for her. I never took one in my life, though I have found many. I hear a cuckoo at this moment; but wood-pigeons I must not hope for: they are large and eatable, and an Italian would take a nest of them if it were in the clouds. Happily, within half a mile of my house there are two woods enclosed with stone walls, which preserve a few belonging to the smaller birds, though even nightingales are killed for the spit in every part of Italy. I tremble for my cuckoo, though he keeps within the stone walls; for the young cuckoo is preferred here to young pigeons."

Replying to this last letter his sister very sensibly remarked that she had no objection whatever to cooks becoming cardinals, if they would only stick to their own frying-pans and not meddle with other people's.

JULY 23, 1830.

"My most important news is, I have bought a shepherd-dog, with a tail that curls over the back, and upright ears. These ears look stiff, but they are more pliable than any others. The back is yellowish, the rest whitish, the nose very pointed, and the teeth so sharp, that these dogs are called here wolf-dogs, *cani lupi*. He came very young, and is extremely fond of me. Sir William Gell had two of them at Naples, who used to accompany him on the double flute, and one (Tikkettee) was rarely out of time: but I have heard better voices, even out of Italy. The children are just now very busy in catching grasshoppers for three young nightingales. Nevertheless the three young nightingales like me best, and fly to me over the back of the *cane lupe*, who growls and takes it ill. He wishes to expostulate, and seems to insinuate that they have no business in houses. I tell him that he has reason on his side, but I whisper that something may be said too about *cani lupi*."

CHRISTMAS-DAY 1830.

"This is Christmas-day, and I wish it may be a pleasanter one to you than to us. We have rain and snow coming down together. I had several invitations to spend the day in Florence, but the children would insist on my staying at home with them. The English here are all very busy about the political doings that are taking place in every part of Europe. The Florentines are quiet and silent. What their opinions are I neither know nor heed, nor should I be the wiser on the subject if they ventured to speak aloud, for they are all dissemblers and liars from first to last. The spirit of party is more violent among the French abroad than at home."

In a letter just before, his sisters had mentioned their garden as having become one of the little lions at Warwick; and he is a constant petitioner that they should send him seeds and cuttings for his own. Particularly he wants red filberts, of which there were none now in Italy, though it was their birthplace; white broom and hollyhock seed, Ipsley double-poppies, and some strawberries from Tachbrooke, which he wishes to add to the

sixteen varieties he already possesses. Harsh as the weather was on that Christmas-day, he was yet able to tell them that all the December month he had cut every week at least sixty well-blown cabbage-roses; the day before writing he had cut twenty-four, besides as many buds; and as he wrote, there was growing wild before his window "a most beautiful pointed tulip, " with narcissuses and jonquils innumerable; and the " blue iris, the root of which is called orris-root, and " used to be mixed in hair-powder."

Anticipating then the desire which all this would awaken in his sisters to know more about the new abode now interesting him so much and affording him such genial occupation, he gave them a description in his next letter (2d February 1831) which may be read with something still of his own interest and pride in this new possession. I shall only further preface it by the remark that the money so generously advanced for its purchase was repaid upon his son Arnold's attaining to his majority in 1839, and that Mr. Ablett declined to the last to accept any interest on the loan:

DESCRIPTION OF HIS VILLA.

"The children were all sitting so comfortably round the fire on my birthday, that they spoilt my intention of writing to you that evening. . . . We have had six cold days, with snow upon the Apennines, and a little of it about half a mile from my villa. You will doubtless be curious to hear something of this villa in which I shall pass the remainder of my life.

"Two years ago, in the beginning of the spring, I took a walk towards Fiesole with a gentleman settled in North Wales, Mr. Ablett. I showed him a small cottage with about twelve acres of land, which I was about to take. He admired the situation, but preferred another house very near it, with a much greater quantity of ground annexed. I endeavoured to persuade him to become my neighbour. He said little at the time, beyond the pleasure he should have in seeing me so pleasantly

situated: but he made inquiries about the price of the larger house, and heard that it was not to be let, but that it might be bought for about two thousand pounds. He first desired me to buy it for him: then to keep it for myself: then to repay him the money whenever I was rich enough—and if I never was, to leave it for my heirs to settle. In fact, he refuses even a farthing of interest. All this was done by a man with whom I had not been more than a few months acquainted. It is true his fortune is very large; but if others equal him in fortune, no human being ever equalled him in generosity.

"I must now give you a description of the place: the front of the house is towards the north, looking at the ancient town of Fiesole, three-quarters of a mile off. The hills of Fiesole protect it from the north and north-east winds. The hall is 31 ft. by 22, and 20 high. On the right is a drawing-room 22 by 20; and through it you come to another 26 by 20. All are 20 ft. high. Opposite the door is another leading down to the offices on right and left; and between them to a terrace-walk about a hundred yards long, overlooking Valdarno and Vallombrosa, celebrated by Milton. On the right of the downward staircase is the upward staircase to the bedrooms; and on the left are two other rooms corresponding with the two drawing-rooms. Over the hall, which is vaulted, is another room of equal size, delightfully cool in summer. I have four good bedrooms upstairs, 13 ft. high. One smaller and two servants' bedrooms over these, 10½ ft. high. In the centre of the house is a high turret, a dovecote. The house is 60 ft. high on the terrace-side, and 50 on the other; the turret is 18 ft. above the 60. I have two gardens: one with a fountain and fine jet-d'eau. In the two are 165 large lemon-trees and 20 orange-trees, with two conservatories to keep them in winter. The whole could not be built in these days for 10,000*l.*

"I am putting everything into good order by degrees: in fact, I spend in improvements what I used to spend in house-rent: that is, about 75*l.* a year. I have planted 200 cypresses, 600 vines, 400 roses, 200 arbutuses, and 70 bays, besides laurustinas, &c, &c, and 60 fruit-trees of the best qualities from France. I have not had a moment's illness since I resided here, nor have the children. My wife runs after colds; it would be strange if she did not take them; but she has taken none here; hers are all from Florence. I have the best water, the best air, and the best oil in the world. They speak highly of the wine

too; but here I doubt. In fact, I hate wine, unless hock or claret."

This was perhaps his happiest time in Italy. The villa gave him employment at home, for which irritating subjects were forgotten or put aside; the Lawleys and other Warwickshire friends pressed upon him hospitalities which he did not so often decline as of old; with "cordial Hare and joyous Gell" many long-remembered pleasures were associated, Hare and his young wife having come to Florence, and visits at each other's houses being frequently interchanged; acquaintance with Mr. Kenyon too, who with his wife made some stay at Fiesole, had ripened rapidly into a friendship which continued through all his later years; to another visitor from England, Mr. Crabb Robinson, introduced to him by his friend Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, and full of cordial talk about Southey, Wordsworth, and Lamb, he had taken no less kindly; other visitors than his countrymen made occasional pilgrimages from afar to see him; and even his literary exercises were unattended, at the moment, by fevers of impossible design or self-invited failures and despairs, for he was simply collecting and revising his poems, and had put away for the present in his desk those dialogues in which, as he told Southey, he had introduced Shakespeare and frightened himself. If his sisters would but visit him now, he had never been so able to bid them welcome. They should have his two best rooms, two more beautiful than any in Warwick-castle, perfumed with orange-flowers, tuberoses, violets, and mignonette growing profusely under the windows. In that February letter they are strongly pressed to come, and to bring with them one of his father's breed of spaniels, and to send Mr. Ablett another. A message to his brother Robert was in the same letter, telling him

his poem was too good for success, and himself too good for failure by any such mistake as marriage. "Henry "is the only one of us exactly cut out for the married "state. But my extreme fondness for children com- "pensates me for everything." Which he proceeds to show.

"Arnold is not ashamed, though almost thirteen, to throw his arms about my neck and kiss me twenty times together; and the others claim the same right, 'and have their claims 'allowed.' Yet he is not effeminate. He is very much admired for his manliness and spirit. He fences, speaks French, and reads Greek passably. I hope he will dance, as I have told him that I lost more pleasure by being a bad dancer than by anything else; and since that he begins to practise more."

Very sensible reply to all this was made by his sisters. They could understand his own enjoyment in the caresses of his children, but not, in the absence of any present plan of life and study, the advantage the children were to derive from it in future years. They spoke of their nephew Charles, now a lad of eighteen (the letter is dated in March 1831), having become a favourite of Dr. Arnold's; so that when their brother Charles had thought of removing him, "I hope not; I cannot spare "him," said Arnold. Why should not his cousin come to England, where all his future interests would be? Was it too late even then to give him the advantage of such a school, where he would not be the less respected for his father's name? Landor's rejoinder was in Dr. Arnold's words, but, alas, with far other meaning: "I cannot "spare him." He was pleased to hear of Charles, who would keep up the name in England; but Arnold would be content to live in Italy. And as for the two younger boys, though he had once thought of the army and the law for them, he had since been thinking they were less

likely to be rogues and impostors if he kept them out of professions. "I lived nearly all the best days of my "life on less than 150*l.* a year; they may do the same. "A young single man in Italy need not spend more. "Music, drawing, reading occupy more innocently the "few hours of life that are worth living than worldly "and lucrative pursuits. Happily all three are very "fond of one another and will never scramble." There was no reasoning with such nonsense as this. Such a fools-paradise can only be shut when the irreparable mischief has been done.

The further letters interchanged in February and March of this year (1831) concerned chiefly the Ipsley estate, and other matters arising out of their mother's death. Landor steadily refuses to profit by the latter incident in any way, and cannot see why his trustees should even think of letting the place. His mother had enjoyed the change of air every summer, and why should not his sisters? Indeed, he would much rather never let it than deprive them of any benefit they might derive from such a change. "Certainly our dear "mother prolonged her life by the quiet of the place, "and the delight she took in its beautiful scenery." The furniture he would most assuredly not receive anything from. Let it be given to some honest family in low circumstances, whose fathers or mothers had ever showed any kindness to any of the Landors: some old servant of their grandmother, or their aunt Eyres. "Llanthony, I am afraid, will never be occupied by "anyone. I proposed to take down the house, and sell "the materials; for certainly neither I nor Arnold will "ever live there. I never think of it without thinking "of the ruin to which it has brought me; leaving me "one of the poorest Englishmen in Florence, instead

" of one of the richest." However, they might not perhaps think him so badly off, if they were to come and see his beautiful villa, his noble hall and staircase. Yet he would rather have had it near Swansea, the part of the world he liked best of any. By choice he would always be within easy walk of the sea. His great failure at Fiesole had been the attempt to raise a turf. He finds the ground will produce everything but grass; so they will know what to send him, and let them not forget his favourite mulberry. The close of his letter turns to the younger generation of Warwickshire names. "Merely names " to me, but connected with remembrances that reach " beyond them." But he supposes the families go on much the same; *and what would the Lucys think if he were to introduce into a dialogue Shakespeare's old Sir Thomas?* His sisters do not directly answer that; but Elizabeth's next letter has a mention of the Lucys, doubtless arising out of it, which is highly picturesque and suggestive. Some families, she says, never seem to change through all their generations. There are the Lucys for instance. Old Lucy was at that time sheriff, and she only hopes his little boy of six years old will appear in court with him. " He is a good little fellow, but " neither judge nor jury could look grave at him. He " is old Lucy precisely. He believes the whole world " was made for him and in honour of his dignity. He " opens his round little eyes, buttons his round little " mouth, inflates his round little face, and is graver than " any owl, including his grandpapa."

## V. England revisited.

That life was to pass without trouble even in the villa Gherardescha, the reader will hardly expect from what he

knows of the character of its new lord. At the opening of 1831 I find him in the thick of a terrible dispute with one M. Antoir, an old *attaché* of the French legation, who, having a cottage near the villa, had accused Landor of stopping an underground watercourse supplying the lands of both, and on his peremptory denial had charged him with asserting what was not true. Hereupon Landor challenged the Frenchman, and asked Mr. Kirkup to be his second; agreeing to abide implicitly by the decision of his friend, who consented to act on that condition only. The matter lives vividly in Mr. Kirkup's memory still, and from his letters the incident is here related. Antoir had enough of the merits of a good fellow to be much liked by his friends; though an *attaché* of the old legitimate days, he had been retained by Louis Philippe's new government for his services and honesty; and his superior, the new minister, took the affair in hand, apparently with the express purpose of seeing him through it safely. "The Count de G," writes Mr. Kirkup, "was "a fine noble-minded liberal, and a capital minister, "too good to last long; and he was soon after suc- "ceeded by the Baron Talleyrand. He knew me, and "came to consult about it. I had lost one of my best "friends, John Scott, by the unfairness of a second, "and had made up my mind not to lose another. We "agreed there must be no fighting. There were faults "on both sides; and if Antoir's was the gravest, Lan- "dor's was the first, and they must make and accept "mutual explanations. The count would answer for "his man; and I must convince Landor, which you "may suppose was no easy task. But I succeeded "that evening up at the villa, and pledged my re- "sponsibility! I went early the next morning to the "count at the hotel dell' Arno. He was in bed, but

"I was shown in. When I told him of my success "he jumped out of bed. He was in his shirt, and he "ran to embrace me. I remember I was half afraid "of him; he was like a bear. I never saw a man so "entirely covered with thick bushy hair. I introduced "Landor to him afterwards, and they liked each other "much. As a curious proof of our friend's docility and "confidence in others at this time, the anecdote may "be worth telling." It is also worth giving as a proof that when not left wholly to himself he was never quite unmanageable.

Mr. Kirkup dates the incident at the close of 1830; and from what Landor wrote to his sister in the first week of the February following, it would seem that the difference had not passed away with the duel.

FIESOLE: FEBRUARY 1831.

"I am sorry to hear of Henry's chancery-suit. I too am tormented by a rascal about a watercourse. At first I gave up to him everything he asked, although my predecessor would give up nothing; but hearing that I had declared I would rather lose everything than have a lawsuit, he made fresh pretensions, which I must resist, as without the water I lose the produce of nearly a hundred lemon-trees, each at least a century old. They have enjoyed this water unrestricted for above forty years. . . . I hope you will have received a copy of my poems.* Lady Mulgrave sent me the *Court Gazette*, in which a flaming panegyric is lavished on them, preparatory, I presume, to announcing my appointment to the see of Canterbury. My Latin poetry is thought better than my English. . . At this season I am so busy grafting my trees that I hardly visit my excellent friend Hare and his most accomplished and sweet-tempered wife once a week. I have grafted forty peaches, twenty-six apricots, fourteen greengages, and as many apples. To-morrow I go to the pears and cherries. Of the morella I shall have twenty; they do not

* They were published on commission by Mr. Moxon (Julius Hare guaranteeing the expenses) at the opening of 1831.

require a wall here, and are the best fruit we have. But my peaches come from Paris, so do the apples, pears, and several plums. There is no garden in Italy so beautiful as yours was at Warwick even before the late improvements. . . My sweet little Julia has lately been unwell; but, thank God, is now quite recovered. The boys are all robust as young eagles."

His letter of eight days later was filled with a very different subject. Florence was to have its share in the excitement that followed the Three Days in France; and it will startle many of Landor's later readers to see how little he shared in it, and how low he had at this time pitched his hope for the regeneration of Italy. It was certainly to be said of the Tuscan government at the time, often as he quarrelled with it, that it was mild and equable; nor had the particular insurrectionary movements of which he speaks anything very special to recommend them in the way of patriotism or courage. But one cannot quite see why he should have sneered at the idea of regeneration, whatever the special improbabilities might be of the fact being at all near. He lived to see at least some advances made to it.

### Italian Patriots in 1831.

"The disturbances that have broken out in Italy may perhaps make our friends in England a little curious and a little anxious. At Florence there is no danger of any commotion. The people are well contented in general with the government of the grand-duke; and the patriotic party, as some men equally cowardly and restless call themselves, have lately more than ever excited the hatred and contempt of the people. On the grand-duke's return from Saxony these worthless slaves proposed to receive him with a grand illumination; but as the time drew nigh their hearts misgave them, and they attempted to throw the greater part of the expenditure on the inferior classes. Many of these holding places under government were unable to refuse their shilling. However, the military showed no small reluctance; and when it came at last to the clergy, the church,

as you may suppose, was in danger. The grand-duke, hearing of the preparations, gave orders that there should be no such equivocal manifestation of the people's joy, and that all the money should be returned. The patriots were indignant, and surrendered their chamberlain's keys; for patriots here accept any gewgaw. The fools expected, from the easy disposition of the prince, that he would request them to retain their offices, but were disappointed. Be assured there is not a patriot in Florence who would have a single pane of glass broken in his window to bring about any change whatever. At my time of life, and with my utter indifference what befalls so rascally a race, you need not apprehend that, in case of a bustle, I should take any part in it. No little pride is excited in me at the recollection that I voluntarily spent more in the Spanish cause, in which neither I nor any of my family had any personal interest, than all these villainous ennobled shopkeepers would voluntarily contribute for the cause they pretend to espouse. Sir Robert Lawley is in high spirits, and thinks the flame will blow nearer. Why he should think it is strange enough, but far more strange why he should wish it. I should not be surprised to see my friend Lord Dillon here again. He was always very enthusiastic for the regeneration of Italy. He is an excellent cavalry officer, and has great coolness in battle, though nowhere else. I hope, however, he will be content to remain quiet at Ditchley, and that he will be persuaded that although in Italy there may be many changes, there never can be any regeneration. The principle of honour and virtue was extinct in Tuscany long before the Romans appeared. They once had an idea of independence, but never of liberty; and the spirit of petty personal revenge is the only spirit they show now, and almost the only one they ever showed. Lombards are sprung from better blood, and possess both sounder minds and stronger bodies. Nevertheless there is one very respectable person in this city, and attached to his master from a sense of duty: a noble dog of the grand-duke's! With this dog and twenty German cooks and scullions I would engage to drive either of the two parties out of the walls, if the grand-duke would appoint me to the command, and let the dog be led by his feeder. I myself too have a fine and faithful one; the only creature I could ever place the smallest confidence in since I came to Florence. I never let any of the natives enter my doors except Luca Medici and Julia's music-master, a quiet, sober, inoffensive man."

The present troubles of his sisters, however, were not about Italy, but England. Reporting to their brother Walter that the whole country was for reform and destruction, they regretted that their brother Charles did not or would not see the danger, for his last letter to them had been all about foxes and fish; but they described their brother Robert as even more downcast than themselves, and they grieved that their glorious country should have fallen into the hands of fools and rogues. Landor rallies and reassures them.

Necessity of Reform in England. (May 20, 1831.)

"You are a little too melancholy in regard to the times. Whatever is happening and about to happen was foreseen by me in the period of Pitt's war against France. He squandered the nation's wealth with more imprudence than the most wanton youth ever squandered his new inheritance; and the facility he found in raising supplies from a venal parliament shows the necessity of changing the system. The misfortune is that the change had not taken place fifty-five years earlier. Then we should not have lost America, except as a colony and a dependant, and by no means as a confederate and friend. But above all we should have had a debt of about 40 instead of 800 millions."

Dec. 29, 1831.

"Many happy new years to you! for the new year will have begun before you get my letter. Do not torment yourself either about cholera or about reform. We know that the one is requisite, and may believe the other is. When the good people of England helped Pitt to gamble in war, and to run the nation in debt beyond the value of all the money in Europe, we might easily have foreseen the result. I did see it, and tried to prevent it, in my remonstrance against the income-tax. . . . Poor Lord Wenlock is nearly blind, but in good spirits. I dined with him, and found all *corps diplomatique* there, so that politics were set aside. To-day we have snow falling. On the 27th of November the hills four miles off were covered with it, since which we have had fine weather till now. Italy is a fine climate, but Swan-

sea better. That however is the only spot in Great Britain where we have warmth without wet. Still, Italy is the country I would live in. My house wants new doors and windows: these I shall begin next year, and at the end of three shall have completed them. In two I hope to have a hundred good peaches every day at table during two months: at present I have had as many bad ones. My land is said to produce the best figs in Tuscany; I have usually six or seven bushels of them. The best kinds are peeled before they are dried; those are of a good colour. The green and purple are less esteemed, but bear better. Nectarines, gooseberries, raspberries, and currants are better in England than anywhere; in other fruits I hope soon to excel you, even in apricots. . . . I should like one chestnut from the tree on the left of the summer-house."

His next letter was dated on the 7th of February in the following year, and announced a sudden intention formed by him to visit England in May. Ablett had pressed him so much, and his obligations to that friend were so great, that he had not felt justified in continuing to refuse.

In May 1832, in midst of the excitement that still was attending the great Reform Bill, he arrived accordingly; and on the 14th of that month wrote from London to tell his sisters that he had traversed France safely in the thick of cholera, but that, missing the boat at Dieppe, he was kept there a week with nothing to see or read, and nobody to talk to. He had afterwards stayed two days at Brighton with the Countess de Molandè and her family, "in the midst of music, dancing, " and fashionable people turned radicals. This amused " me highly. Lady Bolingbroke told me that her hus- " band would never enter the house of lords again. " Yesterday I dined with our good old friend Lord " Wenlock. This morning the people are half-mad " about the king and the tories." He reached London at last, and the very first visit he made was to

the address that had been given him as that of his old friend Dr. Lambe,* in the King's-road; but he failed to find the house. During the three days he now stayed in London, he attended a reception at the Duke of Sussex's, visited Charles Lamb at Enfield, and went up to see Coleridge at Highgate.

In the last two visits his companion was Mr. Crabb Robinson, who had been very anxious that he should see those worthies, and be seen of them. He did not make much of his interview with Coleridge, who, though he put on "a bran-new suit of black" in honour of the visit, and made Landor as many fine speeches as if he had been a little girl, yet managed to keep all the talk to himself, and took no notice of an enthusiastic mention of Southey; but the hour he passed with Lamb was one of unalloyed enjoyment. A letter from Crabb Robinson before he came over had filled him with affection for that most lovable of men, who had not an infirmity that his sweetness of nature did not make one think must be akin to a virtue. "I have just seen Charles "and Mary Lamb," Crabb had written (20th October 1831), "living in absolute solitude at Enfield. I found " your poems lying open before Lamb. Both tipsy and

* Remembering what has been said by Rough and others of this early friend of Landor's (ante, i. 145, 200), the reader may perhaps be amused by an extract from a letter of Mr. Jefferson Hogg to Landor at the close of 1830. "I sometimes see our estimable friend Dr. " Lambe; it is almost impious to say that he is well, wise, and happy, " for the affirmation seems to imply a doubt of the efficacy of veget- " able matter diluted with distilled water. The last time I met him " he told me he had breakfasted on one raw cauliflower, and was " just going to dine on another, and in the evening he was to meet " the whole college of physicians about some professional matters. " It is plain that if a man of his years can feed thus, and then go " boldly and look death in the face, his best friends have nothing " else to wish for him, save that God may give him grace to like his " diet."

" sober he is ever muttering *Rose Aylmer*. But it is not " those lines only that have a curious fascination for " him. He is always turning to *Gebir* for things that " haunt him in the same way."* Their first and last hour was now passed together, and before they parted they were old friends. I visited Lamb myself (with Barry Cornwall) the following month, and remember the boyish delight with which he read to us the verses which Landor had written in the album of Emma Isola. He had just received them through Robinson, and had lost little time in making rich return by sending Landor his Last Essays of Elia. "Pray accept," he wrote, " a little volume. 'Tis a legacy from Elia, you'll see. " Silver and gold had he none; but such as he had " left he you. I do not know how to thank you for " attending to my request about the album. I thought " you would never remember it. Are not you proud " and thankful, Emma? Yes, *very both*." And then underneath the words is the feminine signature of his young friend. "If you can spare a moment," Lamb adds, "I should be happy to hear from you. That rogue " Robinson detain'd your verses till I call'd for them. " Don't intrust a bit of prose to the rogue, but believe " me your obliged C. L. My sister sends her kind re- " gards."

Landor's next visit was to Julius Hare at Cambridge. He saw now for the first time the friend to whose judgment and active kindness he owed so much, and passed three delightful days with him. Then he went to exchange greetings with his sisters at Warwick; and after a week with them, made more joyous by the

* He has quoted in his "Margate Hoy" (*Essays of Elia*) one that he was much given, at all odd out-of-the-way times, to repeat to himself:

" Is this the mighty Ocean? is this all?"

frequent presence of Mr. Kenyon, who with his wife was then staying at Leamington, he pushed on to join Mr. Ablett in North Wales.

From Llanbedr he wrote to his sisters in July. He and Ablett were to leave in another week for Lancashire and Cumberland, where he proposed to spend a day or two with Southey, and about as much time with Wordsworth. He described his friend's Welsh home as abounding in magnificent trees, with the richest valley in the world, as well as the most varied hills; and with lofty mountains not too near, nor too distant, but just as great folks should be. He declared that every cottage on the estate was more habitable than the best house on the continent, for that every one had a patent-oven and a clock, and was surrounded by a garden.

Our next glimpse of him is at the Lakes with Southey and Wordsworth, to whom he introduces Ablett, but with whom his stay is more brief than was at first intended, because of other unlooked-for claims upon him. But an evening was spent in company with both, recollected afterwards for its talk of poets and poetry, wherein I remember his telling me he thought scant justice was done to Byron by his friends, and insufficient appreciation given to Scott; for that, when he had himself quoted from the latter a line about the dog of a traveller lost in the mountain snows, the comment it drew forth was a remark upon it by Wordsworth as the only good line in the piece, with addition that the very same subject had been treated in one of his own poems, which he thereupon recited from beginning to end. I have heard him say also, that, objection having been taken to an over-abundance of imagery in the prose of the *Conversations*, Wordsworth unluckily took to him-

self a remark made in reply, that prose will bear a great deal more of poetry than poetry will bear of prose. The other trace that remains of the visit was left in the album of Wordsworth's daughter, whose earnest intercession for Landor's autograph was seconded with such gracious approval from Wordsworth himself, that Landor could not but sit down and write

"AT WORDSWORTH'S DESIRE.

Glorious the names that cluster here,
The loftiest of our lofty isle—
Who can approach them void of fear,
Though Genius urge and Friendship smile?
To lay one stone upon the hill,
And show that I have climb'd so high,
Is what they bid me. Wordsworth's will
Is law, and Landor must comply."

Once again, before leaving Cumberland, the friends met at the seat of a common friend of both Ablett and Wordsworth, Mr. Rawson of Wastwater; and here, not from Landor only, but from Wordsworth himself, a further tax of album verses, made popular for the time among the friends by Charles Lamb's pleasant little volume published a short while before, was exacted. Landor celebrated the scenery around, and praised its master's modest wisdom, content to hear nature's voice, to shun loud acclaim, "and in his heart find all he wants of fame." Wordsworth, in the same spirit, describing time as in its blindness reproducing ever the troubles it destroys, and bringing happiness only to bear it away, praises his friend for having discerned and set above all time's illusive hopes the will of its eternal master.

I heard myself from Mr. Ablett two or three years later of the happy day thus passed at Wastwater; and the account which I well remember he gave me of the laughable vehemence with which Landor had then de-

nounced the word *impugn*, employed by Southey in the course of their talk, and given up by him, after unavailing defence, to his friend's immitigable wrath, receives amusing confirmation from a reply which I find he made to a letter written immediately after returning to Keswick by Southey, who, finding the word in Spenser and Shakespeare as well as in Cranmer and South, felt he must retract his too hasty surrender, and had taken heart to say so to his friend. "Spenser and Shakespeare," retorts Landor, "have employed words ugly enough, but "this is the most odious. South himself, highly as I "estimate him, and even you, whose language is still "better, will never push me across the road to shake "hands with this uncouth ruffian. You tell me that "we have the word not from the French, but the Nor-"mans. I do not remember any such word in our very "oldest writers, though Cranmer is pretty old; and had "I found it in Chaucer himself, whom I admire and "venerate, I should pity the duress in which so cruel "a bolt was manacled upon him. I do not like the "metaphor: we have in our language too many such, "arising for the most part from the reformers and "sectarians. However, if you *will* put your stamp upon "the word, it must pass on."

The friends separated here, and after a couple of days Southey wrote to say that Landor's recent apparition had been to them as a dream, but as the pleasantest of dreams, and one that was never to be indistinctly remembered. This Landor answered from Warwick, which, he tells his friend, after what appeared to him almost an age of wandering, he had reached the preceding week; which formerly of all places in the world was the most quiet and idle, but now was joining its own noises to those of Leamington. "I remember

" the time, not forty years ago, when Leamington had " only two tenements that joined each other, and in the " whole village only six or seven of any sort, besides " the squire's, one Prew, who was the uncle of my " grandmother. If her brother had lived, he would " have had this vast property, at that time a small one. " I cannot help smiling at the narrow escape I have had " of three such encumbrances."

From Julius Hare he heard in the same week that his visit had left with Wordsworth also the pleasantest impression. Julius had seen much of the great poet in that and the preceding year, having passed some time with him at Rydal; " and rarely indeed in the course " of life," he wrote to Landor, " is one allowed to take " such a survey of all that is lofty and all that is pro- " found in our nature, as one obtains from living with " him in his home. The moral atmosphere he breathes " around him is so pure that all looks fairer and brighter " than elsewhere. He has frequently desired me to give " you his kindest remembrances and the assurances of " his highest regard. Your politics did *not* alarm him. " He was in excellent health and spirits, and talked " with all the alacrity of youth of the day you passed " with him." To this I will add the comment afforded by some sentences from a letter sent by Hare to Landor in the midsummer of the previous year (1831), which future biographers of the poet may thank me for preserving. " When Wordsworth was last with us at the " end of April, I was very much grieved to find how " much the state of the country and the ministerial re- " form-bill had preyed upon his health. Everybody " said he seemed to have grown ten years older in the " last three months. If the bill does all the good which " its most infatuated advocates anticipate, it will hardly

"make amends for this evil." The anticipation of both evil and good is almost always in excess; and brief as were the months that had brought the poet back to his alacrity of youth, they had doubtless satisfied him also that the country was getting on its legs again.

We hear of Landor next in Richmond and in London, from which he wrote to his sisters on the 24th of September to say that his English visit was coming to its close. His wife's family, with whom he had been staying at Richmond, had been most kind to him, but he was very impatient to be again among his own creatures. Cholera had been with him on every side as he travelled, but he had tried to be a match for it, and it would be very spiteful of it to do for him anywhere but at his own villa, where he had a place prepared, and where his two labourers were to have a crown each for planting him. Their brother Robert would tell them of the fortunate meeting "before the inn at Evesham, where his carri-"age and my coach had stopped;" and they would have heard of his visit to Charles at Colton. On the following Saturday he meant to leave England, and they would probably receive meanwhile some pictures he had intrusted to Mr. Ablett for them.

Julius Hare and one of his Cambridge friends (since master of Downing) accompanied Landor on his return. They travelled through Belgium, up the Rhine to Frankfort, and through Munich and the Tyrol into Italy. He reached Florence on the last day of November, and on the 25th of the following month wrote to his sisters one remembrance of his journey:

FIESOLE: CHRISTMAS-DAY, 1832.

"We are enjoying the most serene and brilliant sky, with our windows open. In going through the Tyrol, the snow fell upon us furiously, and we were in danger of passing the

winter at Inspruch. I conversed with several of the companions of Andrew Hofer, and received from one of them a narrative of his death. Nothing was ever more heroic—not even his life. He said: 'I pray God to protect my children and their mother, ' and to pardon her brother, and to let his *fault* be forgotten.' Now what do you think his fault was? Betraying to the French this brave and righteous man. Hofer and Lord Collingwood are in my opinion the two noblest characters of the present age."

After he quitted Hofer's country, and while staying with his friends in Venice, a city that he held always to be incomparable among cities as Shakespeare among men, he had put into his own language what he thus heard from the Tyrolese peasants, and sent it over to England for publication. At the same time he sent also to Kenyon an ode to Southey and an ode to Wordsworth, written while yet he had lingered amid the passes of the Tyrol. Much pleasant verse was in the latter, on the company of immortals with whom he ranked his friend; and very pleasantly it closed by wishing them

> every joy above
> That highly blessed spirits prove,
> Save one: and that too shall be theirs,
> But after many rolling years,
> When 'mid their light Thy light appears.

Nor will the reader object that I should add the closing verse of the yet nobler ode to Southey, in which, referring to the old dedication of the *Curse of Kehama*, there is the grand exaggeration of thanks and praise which, from Raleigh and Spenser downward, poets have exercised the right to give to brother poets, without exception or challenge:

> Not, were that submarine
> Gem-lighted city mine,
> Wherein my name, engraven by thy hand,
> Above the royal gleam of blazonry shall stand;
> Not, were all Syracuse
> Pour'd forth before my Muse,

With Hiero's cars and steeds, and Pindar's lyre
Brightening the path with more than solar fire,
Could I as would beseem requite the praise
Showered upon my low head from thy most lofty lays.

"As soon as I read your ode to Southey," wrote Kenyon to Landor (16th January 1833), "I resolved "to print it. I sounded S. on the subject, and then "sent it to the *Athenæum*, the Editor of which deferred "it for a week, that it might give *éclat* to the first paper "of the year. Southey said something about omitting "the last stanza, as beyond the occasion; but this I did "not attend to." Crabb Robinson wrote to him a few months later that Wordsworth was extremely grateful, though he thought Southey's ode the best, and wished that, in his own, Dryden had been praised less and Spenser more.

Other notices of the year that followed his return to Italy are taken from his letters to his sisters.

Servants in Italy: January 19, 1833.

"We have a cook, to whom we pay six crowns and a half a month, who sends up more coals than meat, and consumes a hundred weight of charcoal in a day; that is, to the value of two shillings. I wish it were possible to get servants from England: I would not have one Italian. I am well convinced that in eighteen months I should save greatly more than the expense of bringing them over. No woman will cook here, nor open a door. As for marketing, I have a labourer (the only honest man within many miles) who serves. If you know of any woman for my wife who can work and iron, &c, any cook, and a man, I will pay their expenses and give each a bottle of good wine daily. This is a great bribe to an Englishman. The Italians drink two or three. I will give the wages usual in England. Every Italian is a thief by nature, and no foreigner can gain the slightest redress."

January 30, 1833.

"The people are in a state of desperation because no snow has fallen. In consequence of this real calamity we shall have

no water in the wells all next summer. Last summer it was sold at fourpence for three gallons; and many thousand lemon-trees died because the proprietors did not choose to buy it at such an exorbitant price. Lemon-trees must be watered every other day, and most abundantly, even till the water runs through. I have 200, all in wretched condition. I am now putting my house in good order. I wish you and Elizabeth would come and see it. To me it appears a perfect Paradise, but unluckily more than one devil has got into it, and of that race of devils that do anything rather than tempt."

SEPTEMBER 9, 1833.

"I have lately planted 1300 vines, 100 olives, and 40 fruit-trees. I shall probably make about five pipes of wine this year; half is the contadino's, half of everything. My two pipes and a half will not be worth above 12*l*, such is the abundance of grapes. If the land were in the plain, the value would be about 4*l*. But I hope to receive for my oil about 20*l*, if indeed I sell it. All other crops were carried away by the heavy rains, and the fruit-trees were ruined last summer, oranges and lemons included. It rained but twice in six months, and those were violent and transitory thunderstorms. The annual fête at Siena is going on, and the grand-duke and his spouse are made much of. They say she is pretty. I never saw her, and probably never shall, for I wish to keep away from princes and all belonging to them. I am quite content with my dogs and cats, which are much better people, though (between ourselves) Sir William Gell's tickettee has learnt to swear—the first dog that ever condescended to this cattish vice; and my favourite cat, Chinchenillo, who always follows me about the fields, killed thirteen half-grown chickens in a single night. Not long before he had extirpated two entire generations of rabbits. I am afraid he will be found to be in correspondence with Captain Rock, though I never heard of his subscribing to the catholic rent, or to the maintenance of O'Connell. His language, when he is accused, is as innocent and naïve as any Paddy's in the world. He confesses everything. He always says, 'Ay, ay!'"

NOVEMBER 25, 1833.

"Among the visitors I have had the pleasure of receiving lately are Mr. Lytton Bulwer, author of *Eugene Aram*, and Captain Basil Hall. I am expecting every day my friend Augustus

Hare, and his brother Marcus, who has just now married a daughter of Sir John Stanley. The Hares are beyond all comparison the most pleasant family *of men* I ever was acquainted with. Francis wants me to dine with him at Rome on Christmas-day, Sir John Paul's birthday, when a dozen or two of both families will meet at his house. But I have old recollections and old feelings about Christmas, and never will dine from home again on that day. The only time I ever did was at Rome with poor Lady Paul. Florence is fuller of English than it has been for several years. Lord Pembroke is here among the rest; and Lord and Lady Castlehaven, Lord Conyngham's pretty daughter, are coming. People talk of war. Certainly some movements are being made among the diplomates. We have happily a very firm and sensible man in that capacity, Mr. George Hamilton Seymour, son of Lord George Seymour. I am afraid however that the ill-health of his father will remove him from us shortly, though he will return. His wife, a daughter of General Trevor, is quite delightful. My children are studying German, but Italian mouths (as theirs are) seem to taste German after Italian as you would taste sloes after raspberries and cream. Carlino quizzes, and learns by quizzing; as I learnt to dance a minuet (the only dance I ever did learn) by mocking poor old Helme."

Here again was the old careless way of adverting to the studies of his children. But it was now becoming pressingly urgent that he should arrive at some decision respecting the education of Arnold. Julius Hare during the last two years had made unavailing inquiries in England for a suitable person to undertake it, and at last had succeeded in finding one whilst travelling in Germany. Landor is expecting the new tutor from Bonn (26th March 1833), M. Schiemers, immediately; and fears he will find his pupil indolent. "But let him "be healthy, honourable, and well-bred, and I care "little about his learning."

## VI. Again in Italy: Old Pictures and New Friends.

Landor had by this time become known, not wisely but too well, among the Italian picture-dealers, who passed through his hands as many rare old masters as would have set up the fortunes of half the galleries in Europe. In this as in too many other things he had no other judgment than his will; and a cheerful self-imposture enabled him in perfect good faith to carry on the imposture honestly with all, even the rascals who made it their commodity. He would so prepare you by a letter for his Rubens or his Raffaelle, or in its presence would do it homage with such perfect good faith, that your own eyes were as ready as his to be made fools to the other senses. "Your picture found its way "to Alton," wrote Augustus Hare to him in the summer of 1833, "and we thought it almost worthy of the "letter which announced its coming. More perfect "than that letter it could not have been, if Raffaelle "had painted the whole of it." Often have enjoyments in this way been mine which the presence of the real masters could not have made addition to; and never had I reason to question his own belief that the canvas did actually contain the glories that were but reflected on it from imagination and desire. It was incident to such treasures of course that they should rapidly accumulate; here and there even a real master crept in; and what with the splendour of the frames, the show upon his walls became magnificent. But the principle of the collection admitted hardly of a limit, and the treasures overflowed. He had taken several with him to England. Ablett had a Carlo Dolce; his sisters some Claudes and Canalettis; and his brother Henry, with

special injunction that he should place them at Tachbrooke which in part he had lately repurchased, some masters as old as Perugino. He now tells his sisters (8th Jan. 1834) that he has a great many more pictures going to them, only delayed by the rogues in the Custom-house wanting more money. As to his brother's or their offering to pay for them, that was quite out of the question. He had more than he has room for, as his windows are low, not reaching to the middle height of the apartments; and they were to tell Henry that his batch would follow. They would be very old ones, Cimabues and Giottos, and were getting ready from suppressed convents and monasteries at Prato and Pistoia. In later years I partook myself of this munificence; and I well remember, when I then met Julius Hare with Landor at Kenyon's dinner-table, with what a grave smile, lighting up the deep-marked lines of his thoughtful face, he spoke of his drawing-room at Hurstmonceaux as perhaps the only one in England that had seven virgins in it almost all of them three hundred years old.

The notices that follow are from Landor's letters to his sisters in 1834, the last that were to be written to them from his home in Italy.

January 8, 1834.

"We have had no winter yet. A friend dined with me on Christmas-day, and we should have dined out of doors if dinner had not been ordered as late as five. The flies have never been so troublesome or so numerous all the summer as they are now. I have jonquils in full flower, two or three roses nearly open, and five or six hundred in bud; not the Chinese rose, which with us is an evergreen. I am busy in planting 1200 vines and 240 olives. My trees are old, and require renewing; some of the olives are four or five hundred years old and literally have nothing but bark and branches. In cutting down one, we found

a boundary-stone perfectly enclosed in it and overgrown by the bark. . . . I wish the children were more contented with their governess: never was there upon earth a less agreeable person. Arnold's tutor is a very good creature; he understands Latin and Greek, but is quite a German. The music-master is my ruin. He costs me 50*l.* a-year. He is however the best perhaps in Italy, and has seven miles to come and go three times a week, as he lives at the other extremity of Florence, and we are two miles and a third from the nearest gate."

August 27, 1834.

"We have heard that Coleridge is dead. He had recovered his health when I saw him, and told me that he had not been better for many years. Poor man! He put on a bran-new suit of black to come down and see me, and made me as many fine speeches as he ever could have done to a pretty girl. My heart aches at the thought that almost the greatest genius in the world, and one so friendly to me, is gone from it. Southey too is likely to suffer the most severe affliction, not merely in the death of his old friend, but his wife (he says) has been long declining in health, and he fears to lose her. She too, when I saw her, was florid and strong, and had not begun to bear the appearance of age in any respect whatever. I hear wonderful things of a new poem by Mr. Taylor, Philip Van Artevelde."

Same Date: A new Book.

"Before a month is over, you or Harry (it comes to the same thing) will receive a very curious book, 'The Examination 'of William Shakespeare before Sir Thomas Lucy *touching Deer-* '*Stealing*.' Of course it will interest Henry more than you, being law. It is not impossible that I may be very soon in England, for I have told Lord Mulgrave that I would accept the Archbishopric of Canterbury, if he would obtain a commendam from the king for me to hold the Popedom at the same time. But perhaps the popular outcry against pluralities may raise some difficulty. I begin to sicken of Italy; for five entire months we have not had rain enough to wash a pocket-handkerchief, and no dew. Even the big leaves are falling off: my pear-trees and peaches are withered. I shall lose nearly sixty. The apricots stand it for the present."

In the same letter he sends word of another consignment of pictures on their way to his sisters and to

Henry. The last had been most successful. Their thanks were profuse; and his sister Elizabeth had described amusingly Henry's enthusiasm, as he knelt before the virgins and children, no less a picture than they. His next letter replies to questions they had put to him about the subjects and masters that formed this new present, which in the interval had also reached them.

November 17, 1834.

"You ask me who Filicaia is. Alas, of how little value is Fame! Wordsworth says he has written the best ode in existence. A noble ode indeed it is, on the raising the siege of Vienna by John Sobieski. It is not however the best in existence by many. Some of Milton's sonnets, and his *Allegro* and *Penseroso*, are infinitely more vigorous in thought and fancy. The lady, half-length, with pearls, &c, is Marie de' Medici, and belonged to the Medici family, with whom I made the exchange. It is painted by Soutermans, who was considered in his time as the rival of Vandyke. By the bye, the Lelys at Warwick-castle, which are called Vandykes, remind me that I saw Lord Warwick in Florence a few days ago. Was there ever so great a change in the human countenance? Again to the pictures. The Esther is by the son of Paul Veronese, not by Paul himself. Joseph holding the infant Jesus is by Ludovico Carracci, the rarest of the Carracci, and by much the best. All these are for you. The rest for Henry; excepting the two landscapes (called early ones by Rubens), and the Salvator, the fellow of which was sold for sixty louis, which three are for my cousin Walter. The two other landscapes, called by Rubens, I doubt of; though they are very clear and clever pictures. The scene before the door of an inn, which Henry likes, is by Teniers. I requested him to let me know how much room he has left for *old* pictures; I mean for those painted before the year 1500. I have many left; and some are much better than those I sent him, although less curious. I have also five more for you: but they must be lined and cleaned and varnished. The sun and flies ruin the pictures here, and they must all be lined and cleaned sooner or later."

This last batch of pictures, his sister Elizabeth tells

him in reply, had become quite "the rage" at Warwick, all sorts of people flocking to see them; but they and their brother had not yet divided the spoil. Her previous letter (22d October), urgently pressing him to pay them another visit in the ensuing year, had given him the melancholy news that Southey's wife had become quite deranged, and was placed in an asylum at York; but if the details had not appeared in Southey's life, the fact would not have been mentioned here.

NOVEMBER 29, 1834.

"I had heard from Mrs. Hodgson, whom you remember as Margaret Holford, the deplorable account of Mrs. Southey, and it totally deprived me of rest. Poor good Southey, what must be his sufferings! The Countess von Schaffgotsche has left us, and Julia has now the governess of Mr. Collingwood's daughters, Miss D'Arville; she has been with us five months, and we are much pleased with her. Arnold's German tutor has obtained a good situation at Rome, and we have engaged Mr. M'Carthy, who was secretary to Lord Wenlock. Arnold and Julia come on prodigiously in German, and Arnold has the finest voice I ever heard. He is more shy than he was, and has less manner; but never was there a more perfect being in temper and principle. He takes too little pains to be pleasing, and yet he pleases everybody . . . . I thank you for your Russian receipt. It appears the Russians make their steaks and their wives tender by the same process" (beating with a stick). "I received a letter last week from my friend Ablett. He reminds me of the promise I made him to renew my visit in three years. Certainly I shall see you next April or May. Julia will go to her mother, and take the two youngest. I will make my first visit to you with Arnold and Julia, and after a week or fortnight proceed to Denbighshire. I send these verses for my answer."

The "verses" were that fine ode to Joseph Ablett to be found in the collected works, which will preserve his friend's name as long as his own survives. I give a great part of it here as written in this letter, because of the many changes made in it as printed, where the

opening stanza is enlarged into two, and the couplet on Coleridge's death is omitted altogether. The allusion to Leigh Hunt was an after-thought, but sent in a letter of only a week's later date. A line more perfect than that upon Wordsworth and Southey,

"Serene creators of immortal things,"

in which more is said or set to a lovelier music, hardly exists in poetry. It is what Marlowe called the gem of peerless price, infinite riches in a little room.

"Lord of the lovely plain,
Where Celtic Clwyd runs to greet the Main,
How happy were the hours that held
Thy friend (long absent from his native home)
Amid those scenes with thee! how far a-field
From all past cares and all to come!

* * *

Together we have visited the men
Whose song Scotch outcries vainly would have drown'd;
Ah, shall we ever grasp the hand again
That gave the British harp its truest sound?
Coleridge hath heard the call, and bathes in bliss
Among the spirits that have power like his.
Live, Derwent's guest! and thou by Grasmere springs!
Serene creators of immortal things.

And live too thou for happier days
Whom Dryden's force and Spenser's fays
Have heart and soul possest:
Growl in grim London he who will,
Revisit thou Maiano's hill,
And swell with pride his sunburnt breast.

Old Redi in his easy-chair
With varied chant awaits thee there,
And here are voices in the grove
Aside my house, that make me think
Bacchus is coming down to drink
To Ariadne's love.

* * *

I never courted friends or Fame;
She pouted at me long, at last she came,

And threw her arms around my neck and said,
'Take what hath been for years delay'd,
And fear not that the leaves will fall
One hour the earlier from thy coronal.'

Ablett! thou knowest with what even hand
I waved away the offer'd seat
Among the clambering, clattering, stilted great,
The rulers of our land;
Nor crowds nor kings can lift me up,
Nor sweeten Pleasure's purer cup.

Thou knowest how, and why, are dear to me
My citron-groves of Fiesole.
* * *
Here can I sit or roam at will;
Few trouble me, few wish me ill,
Few come across me, few too near;
Here all my wishes make their stand;
Here ask I no one's voice or hand;
Scornful of favour, ignorant of fear.
* * *
Behold our Earth, most nigh the sun
Her zone least opens to the genial heat,
But farther off her veins more freely run:
'Tis thus with those who whirl about the great;
The nearest shrink and shiver; we remote
May open-breasted blow the pastoral oat."

On the 26th of January 1835 he wrote again to his sisters, very anxious about Ellen's health, as to which ill report had reached him, and promising Henry at least twenty more pictures, most of them greatly better than the first, and quite as curious, "excepting the "Cimabues, which nobody else possesses, I mean no "private man." Its opening allusion is to some Warwick friends he had called upon.

JANUARY 26, 1835.

"The next morning our minister, George Seymour, came to see me, and I desired him to present them at Court, when she finds herself strong enough for giving parties. He will show them every possible attention. I never knew a man I liked

better than Seymour, and his friendship for me is equal to my regard for him. And now I must tell you that that wicked book about Shakespeare has called forth the most eloquent piece of criticism in our language. You will find it in the *Examiner*. Let me recommend to you Leigh Hunt's *London Journal*, three halfpence a-week. It contains neither politics nor scandal, but very delightful things in every department of graceful literature. It has copied, I hear, word for word the splendid eulogy of the *Examiner*, in its 38th Number of December 17. I intend to send for this paper from its commencement. I am sorry to hear of Charles Lamb's death. If you have not read the *Essays of Elia*, pray send for them. I did hope to see once more both him and poor Coleridge. I have addressed some lines to his sister, whose affecting history I will tell you some day.

Comfort thee, O thou mourner, yet awhile!
Again shall Elia's smile
Refresh thy heart, where heart can ache no more.
What is it we deplore?

He leaves behind him, freed from griefs and years,
Far worthier things than tears:
The love of friends without a single foe;
Unequalled lot below! . . .

Are not his footsteps followed by the eyes
Of all the good and wise?
Though the warm day is over, yet they seek
Upon the lofty peak

Of his pure mind the roseate light that glows
O'er death's perennial snows.
Behold him! from the region of the blest
He speaks: he bids thee rest.

And now I must transcribe for you some verses written on my Carlino by Mr. Milnes."

Being already in type, they may be omitted here. Addressed "to a child with black eyes and golden hair," they stand first in Mr. Milnes's *Poems of many Years;* and, with others to Landor's second son in the *Memorials of a Residence on the Continent,* under the date of

"Fiesole, 1833," they commemorate the introduction to Landor in that year of one who held always afterwards a high place among his friends. The very last of Landor's letters from Italy to Southey was brought over in 1835 by Mr. Milnes, whom it introduced to the laureate; and one of the last received in Italy by Landor, also a letter of introduction for a young poet, was taken over to him by Mr. Swinburne from Lord Houghton after nearly thirty years. Their friendship during the interval had been uninterrupted.

To this date belongs also the personal knowledge of Emerson, which Landor valued as a compliment worthy to have received. "You will hardly remember my name," wrote Emerson to him three years later, "and I will "therefore remind you that in the spring of 1833 I "was indebted to your hospitality and courtesy at Flo- "rence, as I had already been, and shall always be, to "your wisdom." This letter accompanied some books which Mr. Charles Sumner had brought with him to England in 1837, as an acknowledgment of the "de- "light and instruction" derived from the *Imaginary Conversations*.

From the American sculptor Greenough, himself a man of genius, Emerson had received, through a common friend, Landor's invitation to San Domenica di Fiesole; and on the 15th May he went up to dine with him. "I found him noble and courteous, living in a "cloud of pictures at his villa Gherardescha, a fine "house commanding a beautiful landscape. I had "inferred from his books, or magnified from some "anecdotes, an impression of Achillean wrath—an un- "tameable petulance. I do not know whether the im- "putation were just or not, but certainly on this May- "day his courtesy veiled that haughty mind, and he

" was the most patient and gentle of hosts." Emerson proceeds to hint at some of their talk, from which one is prepared to find that Landor produced on his American admirer the effect of a man decided in his opinions, rather liking to surprise, and well content to impress, if possible, his English whim upon even the immutable past. "No great man ever had a great son, if Philip " and Alexander be not an exception; and Philip he " calls the greater man. In art he loves the Greeks, " and in sculpture them only. He prefers the Venus " to everything else, and, after that, the head of Alex- " ander in the gallery here. He prefers John of Bo- " logna to Michael Angelo; in painting, Raffaelle; and " shares the growing taste for Perugino and the early " masters. The Greek histories he thought the only " good, and after them Voltaire's. I could not make him " praise Mackintosh, nor my more recent friends; but " Montaigne very cordially, and Charron also, which " seemed indiscriminating." He appears to have talked, too, of Wordsworth, Byron, Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher; to have lauded Southey, somewhat to the impatience of his visitor; to have expressed great admiration for Washington; and to have praised the beautiful cyclamen which grows all about Florence.

A second time Emerson shared the hospitality of the villa, and this time Greenough accompanied him, when Landor entertained them by reciting at once half-a-dozen hexameter lines of Julius Cæsar's! from Donatus, he said. "He glorified Lord Chesterfield more than was " necessary, and undervalued Burke, and undervalued " Socrates; designated as three of the greatest of men, " Washington, Phocion, and Timoleon; and did not " even forget to remark the similar termination of their " names. A great man, he said, should make great

" sacrifices, and kill his hundred oxen without know-
" ing whether they would be consumed by gods and
" heroes, or whether the flies would eat them." Emerson had seen some wonderful microscopes in Florence, and spoke of the uses to which they were applied; but he found that "Landor despised entomology, yet in the " same breath said *the sublime was in a grain of dust:*" which anticipated the fine saying by Herschel about the microscope and telescope being explorers of the infinite "in both directions." Emerson adds to these notices of Landor's talk, after mentioning one of his rooms filled with pictures, that he had been more curious to see his library; but that one of the guests at the dinner told him Landor gave away all his books, and had never more than a dozen at a time in his house. Which indeed was perfectly true.

The sum of Mr. Emerson's impressions of the famous Englishman, one of the three or four he had come so far to see, written thirteen years after they thus had met, shall be given in his own words. "Mr. Landor carries " to its height the love of freak which the English de-
" light to indulge, as if to signalise their commanding
" freedom. He has a wonderful brain, despotic, vio-
" lent, and inexhaustible, meant for a soldier, by some
" chance converted to letters, in which there is not a
" style nor a tint not known to him, yet with an Eng-
" lish appetite for action and heroes. The thing done
" avails, and not what is said about it. An original
" sentence, a step forward, is worth more than all the
" censures. Landor is strangely undervalued in Eng-
" land; usually ignored; and sometimes savagely at-
" tacked in the reviews. The criticism may be right or
" wrong, and is quickly forgotten; but year after year
" the scholar must still go back to Landor for multi-

" tudes of elegant sentences, for wisdom, wit, and in-
" dignation that are unforgettable."

A sudden departure of some friends whom he wished to accompany to Venice took Emerson away from Florence at the close of May, and compelled him to say adieu to Landor by letter instead of in person. The letter thanked him earnestly for his ready hospitality to a stranger, and took occasion " at the same time again to ac-
" knowledge a very deep debt of pleasure and instruc-
" tion to the author of the *Imaginary Conversations*."

Nearly twenty years later, when Landor had his home in Bath, and while the Exhibition of '51 was bringing all the world to London, he was reminded by the American sculptor who thus visited him with Emerson of one subject that had arisen in their conversation under his " fig-trees on the southern slope of the Fiesolan hills," not included in his countryman's recollections. Looking down on the little village where Michael Angelo was born, they had spoken of the kind of art that the Tuscan princes had chosen chiefly to encourage in Florence, since the date when the founder of the monarchy entered as prince, and Michael Angelo went out as exile. This was the art of mosaic: the school for fashioning " piebald mineralogical specimens into a greater
" or less resemblance of fruits, flowers, and landscapes;" which had flourished while Giotto was overlaid with whitewash and Leonardo and Raffaelle were carried off by strangers from their native cities; and which had dared at last to rear, by the very side of the tombs of Giuliano and Lorenzo, the so-named (and well-named) Chapel of the Princes, all whose ornaments were the products of its Chinese industry and Turkish taste. Mr. Greenough reminded Landor of a remark he had made upon their having with such gewgaws brushed

the very beard of the sculptor of Moses, that it was "as if a fellow in a laced coat should start up to claim "attention where Cæsar was and was speaking;" and what now would he say to the production that had been sent over from Florence to represent the birthplace of Buonarotti at the world's fair, which was neither more nor less than a table in pietra dura that had cost a hundred thousand francesconi, or, in other words, a day's work of four hundred thousand Tuscans! "I cannot but think," was Greenough's appeal to Landor, "that such stolid impertinence as this calls for "justice at your hand. I know no one else who unites "the knowledge and feeling necessary to judge them, "with the vigour and mastery required for their execu- "tion. I pray you, sir, as you look upon that table, to "reflect upon the size of the Grand Duchy, the apti- "tude of its children for the nobler development of art, "the numbers devoted to its cultivation here, their "pitiable poverty; and I am sure that you will deal "with the wrong according to its deserts. The classic "scourge of your Latin hexameters, or the English "whip bequeathed you by the Dean, either of these, "or both, may do somewhat, as well in your country "as in mine, to check ostentatious barbarism; may show "that genius and sentiment can convert all stone to "precious stone; while the obscure diligence of years, "uninformed by art, makes but a monument of labo- "rious idleness."*

Landor had endorsed this passage of the letter with a characteristic approval which its closing sentence not less deserved. It spoke of the fame which Emerson had justly won since the days in which they had met at Fiesole, and hinted at the only disadvantage under

* Letter dated "Florence, March 28th, 1851."

which the wealth of his genius placed him, of using often language so weighted with meaning as necessarily to express of any given thing more than he could by any possibility see in it. "Perhaps Emerson is greedy in "this way sometimes, but still 'they be prave 'ords.' I "am sure that the Greek statues, though they are not "tormented by an ambition to say all, yet include all; "and I remember having heard you remark, in my "workroom, that their writers, too, were as profound "in fixing the limits of their art."

Landor had also objections of his own to state to the "brave words" of the great American, when, two or three years after Greenough's letter was written, Emerson published his description of the meeting at Fiesole; and to begin with, he protested that the short conversations held at his Tuscan villa were insufficient for an estimate of his character and opinions. But one does not assume to give a man's character in putting forth a few of his sayings, although in one or two recorded by Emerson, such as the preference of Giovanni da Bologna over Michael Angelo, there was perhaps more character than either sayer or listener knew at the time. To an outbreak of spleen at a neighbour resident in Fiesole whom Landor had quarrelled with, and who claimed to be Michael Angelo's descendant, the sculptor of Bologna owed that momentary elevation. It did not last even as long as the trumpery quarrel: for Landor's heaviest blow against the offending Italian was delivered afterwards under cover of the immeasurable supremacy of his ancestor. "Deplorable," he then exclaimed, "that "the inheritor of his house and name should be so vile "a sycophant that even the blast of Michael's trum-"pet could not rouse his abject soul!" Assuredly this trumpet was not one that to Landor at any time gave

an uncertain sound. He objected, now and then; I have even heard him so irreverent as to compare a famous painting in the Sistine-chapel to a prodigious giblet-pie; but he never really faltered in his allegiance to the greatest master of Italian art.

Another of his complaints was that Emerson should have ascribed to him the saying that the Greek historians were the only good ones. He did not think so. Davila, Macchiavelli, Voltaire, Michelet, had afforded him much instruction and much delight; Gibbon he held to be worthy of a name among the most enlightened and eloquent of the ancients; and he gloried in his friend and countryman William Napier, who had balanced with an equal hand Napoleon and Wellington. He claimed also not to have been so indiscriminating as Emerson supposed in his judgment of Charron. He had not compared him with Montaigne, but he had found wisdom in him, and what was rare, sincerity. While he admitted that he did not like Mackintosh, he yet professed (with perfect truth) to be more addicted to praise than to censure; claiming in this to be unlike the English in general, who were as fierce partisans in literary as in parliamentary elections, and as ready to cheer as to jostle a candidate of whom in actual truth they knew nothing. Of both parties in politics he had always kept himself clear, possessing votes in four counties without ever giving one; and in the turbulent contest for literary honours he had not been less abstinent. In short (as he almost always ended such personal confessions), he had never envied any man anything but waltzing, for which he would have given all the acquirements he had; and he had not failed in this because he was inactive, or not accurate of ear, but because he was ashamed, or rather shame-faced.

Socrates he had never undervalued. Incomparably the cleverest of all the sophists, he had turned them all into ridicule; and for this he honoured him, though as a philosopher he counted him inferior to Epicurus and Epictetus. He did not despise entomology, but was only ignorant of it; as indeed he was of almost all science; loving also flowers and plants, but knowing less about them than is known by a beetle or a butterfly. He had no disposition to glorify Chesterfield, though he thought him one of the best of our writers in regard to style; but only to put in a word in defence of his *Letters*, as to which he alleged the authority of the son of Beresford, archbishop of Tuam, for the statement that that most reverend person had placed them in the hands of his daughter. A polished courtier and a virtuous prelate knew their value; and for his own part he thought that perhaps the neglect of them in modern days was one reason why a gentleman was become almost as rare as a man of genius.

What most had nettled him in Emerson's book, however, was not the report of any saying of his own, but a remark upon him made by Carlyle. "Landor's principle "is mere rebellion." He maintained that quite the contrary was apparent and prominent in many of his writings. He had always been conservative; but he had the eager wish, wherever evil of any kind presented itself, political, moral, or religious, to eradicate it straightway without reference to the old blockhead cry of what was to be substituted in its place. When docks or thistles were plucked up, was any such question asked? "I "have said plainly, more than once, and in many quar- "ters, that I would not alter, or greatly modify, the "English constitution." He had no fondness for mere innovation. Whatever is changed should rest, if pos-

sible, on what has been tried. A foundation, if ever solid, was the more solid the longer it had stood. It was because he approved of the hereditary character of the bulk of the house of lords that he would have a better sort of life-peers introduced into it than were there at present: for he thought it the worst place in the world to put a bishop in, and would send a beadle after every overlooker that left his diocese, except on service for the head of the church, his sovereign. As to such royal service too, when rendered by the higher nobility, he would not have them paid for it as menials are paid: he had too much respect for the order. Not that he included in this order the peerage alone. Among the country gentlemen of England were men whose ancestors were noble when the ancestors of half the peerage were nothing better than serfs.

Thus he came by degrees to the avowal of a republicanism in which he recognised authority, as opposed to that mere democracy which he admitted to be "the "principle of rebellion." His views were not such as to propitiate either Carlyle or Emerson, but have an interest for us here. He did not believe that we should rest where we are; and was equally uncertain, when Enceladus should have shaken his shoulder and turned his side, whether we should then rest long. Democracy as it existed in America he declared to be his abhorrence. Lax and disjointed, it always wore out the machine. Republicanism was quite otherwise; but, alas, where did it now exist? Few had been the nations capable of receiving, fewer of retaining, that pure and efficient form. The nations on the Ebro and the mountaineers of Biscay had enjoyed it substantially for century after century. Holland, Ragusa, Genoa, Venice, had been deprived of it by that holy alliance whose influence had withered the

continent, and changed even the features of England. One of the worst of public calamities, in Landor's opinion, was the overthrow of the Venetian republic. Then was swept away the oldest and truest nobility in the world. "How happy were the Venetian states governed "for a thousand years by the brave and intelligent gen- "tlemen of the island city! All who did not conspire "against its security were secure. Look at the palaces "they erected. Look at the arts they cultivated. And "look now at their damp and decaying walls." But at this point he checked himself. The disbelief he indulged, while yet resident in Italy, in all hope for Italian regeneration,* was replaced by a better faith but a few years after his return to England; and it had become his conviction, when he thus remarked on Emerson's notices of Fiesole, that even within the damp and decaying walls of Venice lay the pledge of her ultimate restoration. "Enter: and there behold such countenances as you "will never see elsewhere. These are not among the "creatures whom God will permit any deluge to sweep "away. Heretofore a better race of beings has uni- "formly succeeded to a viler, though a vaster; and it "will be so again." The several races of Italians had but to compose their petty differences, quell their discordances, stand united, and strike high. *Miles, faciem feri*, he reminded them, was the cry of the wisest and most valiant of the Roman race.

All this has carried us somewhat out of date; but the final reference I have to make to Emerson will bring us back to the exact time at which my narrative had arrived: that of Landor's closing days in Fiesole. He was not displeased that Emerson should have noted in him, at that early time, a taste for the pre-Raffaellite painters

* Ante, p. 238.

of Italy, and he described the ignorance of them among the Italians themselves to be such that he was reckoned a madman for indulging his taste. He met a tailor one day with two small canvases under his arm, and two others in his hands; he had given a few paoli for them; and, when offered as many francesconi for his bargain, he thought the English signor must be fairly out of his wits. "I was thought a madman, too," continued Landor, "as I sat under the shade of a vast old fig-tree, "while about twenty labourers were extirpating three or "four acres of vines and olives in order to make some-"what like a meadow before my windows. *Matti sono* "*tutti gli Inglesi, ma questo poi* . . followed by a shrug "and an aposiopesis."

He might so have been engaged when, in the early spring of 1834, he received a visit from another American as little famous at the time as his former American visitor had been, but reserved for a future fame altogether different from Emerson's. This was Mr. N. P. Willis, whose fuss and fury of boundless hero-worship found in Landor an easy victim. I shall make my allusion to him as brief as possible. Upon quitting Florence, after receiving much hospitality at the villa, he took with him the manuscript of a new book by Landor, which, with a letter of introduction to Lady Blessington, who had now taken up her residence in London, he was to deliver on his arrival there; and he carried off with him at the same time not only the author's copy, interleaved and enlarged, of all the published volumes of the *Conversations*, but also the manuscript of that additional unpublished volume of which already I have described the subjects and speakers; both being designed for publication, not in England but America. Landor's own account may be quoted. "At this time an American traveller passed

" through Tuscany, and favoured me with a visit at my " country seat. He expressed a wish to reprint in Ame- " rica a large selection of my *Imaginary Conversations*, " omitting the political. He assured me they were the " most *thumbed* books on his table. With a smile at so " energetic an expression of perhaps an undesirable " distinction, I offered him unreservedly and uncondi- " tionally my only copy of the five printed volumes, in- " terlined and interleaved in most places, which I had " employed several years in improving and enlarging, " together with my manuscript of the sixth, unpublished. " He wrote to me on his arrival in England, telling me " that they were already on their voyage to their des- " tination." They had sailed from Leghorn, and the sequel of their adventures will shortly be stated.

A few lines from a letter (9th June 1834) from Lady Blessington to Landor will tell us meanwhile of the other packet also taken charge of by the traveller. " I " have received your manuscript, and am delighted with " it. Mr. Willis delivered it to me with your letter, " and I endeavoured to show him all the civility in my " power, in honour of his recommendation." The manuscript was the book about Shakespeare, of which we have seen mention in the family letters from time to time, as "curious" and even "wicked;" which was published in London in the autumn of 1834; and of which some account is now due from me.

## VII. Examination of Shakespeare for Deer-stealing.

The letter in the foregoing section dated at the close of January 1835 is the last which Landor wrote to his sisters from Italy; and I have retained in it an

allusion quite undeserved to a youthful criticism of mine upon the Shakespeare book, because it led to our acquaintance not many weeks after his arrival in England. The opinion then formed of that book I retain unaltered. One of the last things said to me by Charles Lamb, a week or two before his death, was that only two men could have written the *Examination of Shakespeare*—he who wrote it, and the man it was written on; and that is exactly what I think.

Landor's first notice of it to Lady Blessington had been in a letter of the previous April, in which, after mentioning that he had for some time been composing *The Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare, Euseby Treen, Joseph Carnaby, and Silas Gough, Clerk, before the worshipful Sir Thomas Lucy, Knight, touching Deer-stealing on the 19th day of September in the year of grace* 1582, *now first published from original papers*, he added, "This "is full of fun; I know not whether of wit. It is the "only thing I ever wrote that is likely to sell." This was a hint to his friend that she was to get him some money for it, which indeed he had already promised, with unquenched ardour of hope and all his old splendour of beneficence, to a schoolfellow in distress.* But by the time Lady Blessington wrote back to him that she could by no means get money for the anonymous venture (the joke of the "original papers" turning of course on the reality of Mr. Ephraim Barnett, their editor and reporter), Landor had discovered gaming to be the cause of his schoolfellow's distress, and no longer cared to get money for him. "Had he even tried but "a trifle of assassination, I should have felt for him; "or, in fact, had he done almost anything else. But "to rely on superior skill in spoliation is less pardon-

* See ante, i. 491-2.

" able than to rely on superior courage, or than to " avenge an affront in a sudden and summary way." Just as content, therefore, to pay for printing as to be paid for printing, his book crept into the world unrecompensed and unannounced in the autumn of 1834.

I did my best then to draw attention to it; but the popularity of the subject has not made it an exception to Landor's works in general, and what has been done for them remains here also necessary. I will show briefly its plan; and very insufficiently, by such passages as can be taken without impairment of their beauty, something of its manner also. But I have no hope of conveying an approximate impression of what the book really is. Even if its richness of humour could be shown, the variety of its wit, and what it presents of a very rare union of the higher order of imagination to pathos as well as character of the simplest kind, there would be something beyond all this, untold and still to be discovered. As Marlowe defied the combined powers of the poets to do justice to the face of his mistress, for that the highest reaches of a human wit might be attained by them, and

> " Yet should there hover in their restless heads
> One thought, one grace, one wonder at the best
> Which into words no virtue can digest;"

so one finds here. There is a subtlety of genius as of beauty that escapes when we would fix the expression of any special charm: but at least one thing can be truly said of it, that with its very grain and tissue there is interwoven a purpose profoundly human. It is a book steeped in the deepest waters of humanity. It would have been characterised as gentle when the word meant all that is noble as well as mild and wise. There has been nothing written about Shakespeare so

worthy of surviving; and whatever becomes of it now, its final place will probably be found near that loved and everlasting name.

Its plan is the simplest possible. Excepting the justice and the culprit, the only persons present at the examination are the justice's chaplain Sir Silas Gough, his clerk Mr. Ephraim Barnett who reports it, and the two countrymen who watched Shakespeare and his fellows in the forest and give evidence of the offence, Joseph Carnaby and Euseby Treen. It is an hour before noontide in the great hall at Charlecote, and the case is proceeding as an ordinary sessions matter, when suddenly, one hardly discovers how, the offence of the culprit has become nothing, and the culprit himself everything: for justice, chaplain, witnesses, reporter, all without seeming to intend it, are adding only in their several ways to the interest he has contrived to awaken; and even the anger of the worshipful knight, which had fallen heavily on him at first for his girdings at the chaplain, only succeeds in so finding utterance as to foreshadow something humorously different. "Young "man, I perceive that if I do not stop thee in thy "courses, thy name, being involved in thy company's, "may one day or other reach across the county; and "folks may handle it and turn it about, as it deserv-"eth, from Coleshill to Nuneaton, from Bromwicham "to Brownsover. And who knoweth but that, years "after thy death, the very house wherein thou wert "born may be pointed at and commented on by knots "of people, gentle and simple! What a shame for an "honest man's son! . . . But with God's blessing the "hundred shall be rid of thee, nay the whole shire. "We will have none such in our county: we justices "are agreed upon it, and will keep our word now and

" for evermore. Wo betide any that resembles thee in " any part of him !"

Then comes the evidence; but the witnesses have less to tell of seeing Willy in Charlecote-park helping to carry off the deer, than of hearing him with his wonderful talk frighten his companions in its moonlit glades. A few touches reproduce the scene so vividly that we seem ourselves to have part in his strange vagaries, his Windsor whimsies, his Italian girl's nursery sighs, his Pucks and pinchings, his sleep under the oaks in the ancient forest of Arden, and his waking from sleep in the Tempest far at sea. " Willy, Willy, prithee stop; " enough in all conscience !" cries the voice of one of his accomplices. " Now art thou for frightening us again " out of all the senses thou hadst given us, with witches, " and women more murderous than they." " Stouter " men and more resolute," cries a deeper voice, " are " few; but thou, my lad, hast words too weighty for flesh " and bones to bear up against." Even Joseph Carnaby, awfully testifying in the justice's room to what he saw and heard by Mickle-meadow as the buck was killed and carried off, looks the most guilty-like of the party. " Willy stands there," says the recording Ephraim, " with all the courage and composure of an inno- " cent man; and indeed with more than what an in- " nocent man ought to possess in the presence of a " magistrate."

Meanwhile the worshipful Sir Thomas Lucy himself is sorely at a loss for the meaning of all that honest Carnaby swears to, and still more at a loss to find a reason for his own tolerance of the slayer of his deer. " I am not ashamed," he says aside to his chaplain, " to avouch that it goeth against me to hang this young " fellow, richly as the offence in its own nature doth

" deserve it; he talketh so reasonably; not indeed so " reasonably, but so like unto what a reasonable man " may listen to and reflect on. There is so much too " of compassion for others in hard cases, and something " so very near in semblance to innocence itself in that " airy swing of lightheartedness about him. I cannot " fix my eyes (as one would say) on the shifting and " sudden shade-and-shine, which cometh back to me, " do what I will, and mazes me in a manner and " blinks me."

There are two accomplishments on which the knight prides himself above all others, his theology and his poetry; and when half induced by the "young fellow" to think it possible that there may be theology without curses and a poem without flourishes, the entire affair becomes difficult to him. Nor does the submissive reverence to himself, which the lad never lays aside, make the mystery more soluble. "Alas, alas!" cries Willy, when Sir Thomas has rebuked him for calling it a south wind that blows a ship northward, "we pos- " sess not the mastery over our own weak minds when " a higher spirit standeth nigh and draweth us within " his influence." "Very well," cries Sir Thomas with delight, "very good, wise, discreet, judicious beyond " thy years."

Here is a scrap of writing found in Willy's pockets, among sundry others of not inferior merit, and read out in the justice-room.

"THE MAID'S LAMENT.

I loved him not; and yet now he is gone
  I feel I am alone.
I check'd him while he spoke; yet could he speak,
  Alas, I would not check.
For reasons not to love him once I sought,
  And wearied all my thought

To vex myself and him: I now would give
My love, could he but live
Who lately lived for me, and when he found
'Twas vain, in holy ground
He hid his face amid the shades of death.
I waste for him my breath
Who wasted his for me: but mine returns,
And this lorn bosom burns
With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep,
And waking me to weep
Tears that had melted his soft heart: for years
Wept he as bitter tears.
'Merciful God!' such was his latest prayer,
'These may she never share!'
Quieter is his breath, his breast more cold,
Than daisies in the mould,
Where children spell, athwart the churchyard gate,
His name and life's brief date.
Pray for him, gentle souls, whoe'er you be,
And, O, pray too for me."

To these lines, on which a word of explanation will be suggested hereafter, Sir Thomas objects not unreasonably that the wench herself might well and truly have said all that matter without the poet, bating the rhymes and metre; and as to the metre, reproaching Willy with giving short measure in every other sack of his load, he declares he is reminded of nothing so much as badgers, a long leg on one quarter and a short leg on the other. But when his chaplain smells popery and wax candles, and says that if praying for the dead isn't popery he knows not what the devil is, his worship, who had been moved in spite of his better judgment, even comes to the rescue; by a happy emendation of the last line but one into

"Pray for our Virgin Queen, gentles, whoe'er you be,"

delivers Willy out of his popish thraldom; and while he has to confess that the poem has not a posy or ornament about it, not even a lump of sugar at the bottom of

the glass, half-excuses the disastrous fact. "Of all the "youths that did ever write in verse, this one verily is "he who hath the fewest flowers and devices. But it "would be loss of time to form a border in the fashion "of a kingly crown, or a dragon or a Turk on horse-"back, out of buttercups and dandelions."

The chaplain now despairs of getting any good from more examination, and calls for the lad's commitment without further ado; suggesting that the sentence of death can come afterwards, and be commuted if need be. But his worship is arrested by a few words from Willy thereon, which Ephraim cannot write down without remarking that, had they been a better and nobler man's, they would deserve to have been written in letters of gold. "Worshipful sir, a word in the ear is often as "good as a halter under it, and saves the groat." So the warrant of commitment is again put aside, and the lad has instead a lecture read to him upon his ill character in the county; that he is dissolute and light, much given to mummeries and mysteries, wakes and carousals, cudgel-fighters, mountebanks, and wanton women; also that it was said of him (his worship hoped *this* might be without foundation) that he enacted parts, and not simply of foresters and fairies, girls in the green-sickness and friars, lawyers and outlaws, but likewise, having small reverence for station, of kings and queens, knights and privy councillors, in all their glory. "Reason and "ruminate with thyself now," he adds, as the chaplain declares folks had been consumed at the stake for pettier felonies, and Willy holds down his head; "canst "thou believe it to be innocent to counterfeit kings "and queens? Supposest thou that if the impression "of their faces on a farthing be felonious and rope-"worthy, the imitation of head and body, voice and

" bearing, plume and strut, crown and mantle, and " everything else that maketh them royal and glorious, " be aught less? Perpend, young man, perpend. Con- " sider who among inferior mortals shall imitate them " becomingly? Dreamest thou they talk and act like " checkmen at Banbury fair? How can thy shallow " brain suffice for their vast conceptions? How darest " thou say, as they do, Hang this fellow, quarter that, " flay, mutilate, stab, shoot, press, hook, torture, burn " alive? *These are royalties.* Who appointed thee to " such office?"

Willy has never "a word on the nail" for all this; though at the reading of another copy of verses out of his pocket, in praise of the knight and his lady, he has something to say for bringing in the great without leave, on Sir Thomas telling him he had never himself obtained his honourable dame's permission to praise her in guise of poetry: "she ought first to have been sounded; and " it being certified that she disapproved not her glorifi- " cation, then might it be trumpeted forth into the " world below." To which the youngster replies that he doth surely imagine any honourable man (omitting to speak of ladies) would reject as a gross offence the application for permission openly to praise him, since " even to praise oneself, although it be shameful, is less " shameful than to throw a burning coal into the in- " cense-box that another doth hold to waft before us, " and then to snift and simper over it, with maidenly " wishful coyness, as if forsooth one had no hand in " setting it a-smoke." Whereunto Sir Thomas, out of his zeal to instruct the ignorant, makes this reply:

" Nay, but all the great do thus. Thou must not praise them without leave and license. Praise unpermitted is plebeian praise. It is presumption to suppose that thou knowest enough of the

noble and the great to discover their high qualities. They alone could manifest them unto thee. It requireth much discernment and much time to enucleate and bring into light their abstruse wisdom and gravely-featured virtues. Those of ordinary men lie before thee in thy daily walks: thou mayest know them by converse at their tables, as thou knowest the little tame squirrel that chippeth his nuts in the open sunshine of a bowling-green. But beware how thou enterest the awful arbours of the great, who conceal their magnanimity in the depths of their hearts, as lions do."

More surprising to the erudite magistrate however than even the young lad's dabblings in poetry, are the scraps he repeats of sermons heard by him at St. Mary's Oxford when visiting the city on his father's business. The preacher is a learned Doctor Glaston, who had been attracted to the stranger-youth in church; and had carried him away from the temptation of the Mitre to pass the day in his rooms, even before he inquired his name. "William Shakespeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, "at your service, sir."

"'And welcome,' said he; 'thy father ere now hath bought our college wool. A truly good man we ever found him; and I doubt not he hath educated his son to follow him in his paths. There is in the blood of man, as in the blood of animals, that which giveth the temper and disposition. These require nurture and culture. But what nurture will turn flint-stones into garden mould? or what culture rear cabbages in the quarries of Hedington-hill? To be well born is the greatest of all God's primary blessings, young man, and there are many well born among the poor and needy. Thou art not of the indigent and destitute, who have great temptations; thou art not of the wealthy and affluent, who have greater still. God hath placed thee, William Shakespeare, in that pleasant island, on one side whereof are the syrens, on the other the harpies, but inhabiting the coasts on the wider continent, and unable to make their talons felt or their voices heard by thee. Unite with me in prayer and thanksgiving for the blessings thus vouchsafed. We must not close the heart when the finger of God would touch it. Enough if thou sayest only, 'My soul, praise thou the Lord.'"

On which Sir Thomas, his chaplain remaining mute, cries Amen, much to the discomfiture of the holy man, who remarks that he can say Amen too "in the proper " place." But once fairly under weigh with what he pretends to have noted down from the discourses of Doctor Glaston, and Willy has his own way with Justice Lucy. The knight misses authority now and then, wants something doctrinal, has a longing for a thread or two from coats of the fathers, hankers after the perfume of a sprig from Basil, or is thirsty for a smack of Augustin, but for the most part is lying back in his chair in his easiest attitude, opening his ears to their widest stretch, and telling Willy to go on with his sermons. And Willy goes on so eagerly, pouring out under Doctor Glaston's name such a rapture of religious exhortation in language so unknown to any school of divinity, that Sir Thomas, finding the apostles as well as the fathers borne away from him on that stream of poetry and eloquence, of imagination, reason, and wit, is fain at last to save his own orthodoxy by putting in a word for form's sake. " Reasonable enough," he murmurs, " nay, almost too " reasonable; but where are the apostles, where are the " disciples, where are the saints, where is hell-fire? " Well, well," as he again falls back with unabated enjoyment, "patience, we may come to it yet. Go on, " Will." Will now, in short, has entirely the upper hand of Sir Thomas; the young poacher leads the justice by all his senses, ears, eyes, and nose; and "honest" Willy is the epithet at last applied to him. " Such was " the very word," says Mr. Ephraim Barnett, who for the moment fancies his own ears are deceiving him.

A sad defalcation all this of the allegiance due to fathers and doctors from a justice of peace and quorum; and though to see the light that led astray might suggest

some forgiveness, it is difficult to show it by selections. Profuse as are the striking thoughts and images in the book, and wonderful everywhere the fitness and felicity of its style, its higher wealth of imagination and wit is inseparable from the subtlety of its art and design. The book fades as only the good things of its author appear; but, taken each at its own worth, how masterly they are! And what are we to say of a writer from whom such things drop so abundantly on any subject that engages him, but that, however distant be his full inheritance of fame, he can afford to wait the time.

THE TWO BESETTING SINS.

"Lust seizeth us in youth, ambition in mid-life, avarice in old age; but vanity and pride are the besetting sins that drive the angels from our cradle, pamper us with luscious and most unwholesome food, ride our first stick with us, mount our first horse with us, wake with us in the morning, dream with us in the night, and never at any time abandon us. In this world, beginning with pride and vanity, we are delivered over from tormentor to tormentor, until the worst tormentor of all taketh absolute possession of us for ever. . . . William, William, there is in the moral straits a current from right to wrong, but no reflux from wrong to right; for which destination we must hoist our sails aloft and ply our oars incessantly, or night and the tempest will overtake us, and we shall shriek out in vain from the billows, and irrecoverably sink."

TO THE YOUNG, RICH AND POOR.

"Young gentlemen, let not the highest of you who hear me this evening be led into the delusion, for such it is, that the founder of his family was *originally* a greater or a better man than the lowest here. He willed it, and became it. He must have stood low; he must have worked hard; and with tools moreover of his own invention and fashioning. He waved and whistled off ten thousand strong and importunate temptations; he dashed the dice-box from the jewelled hand of Chance, the cup from Pleasure's, and trod under foot the sorceries of each; he ascended steadily the precipices of Danger, and looked

down with intrepidity from the summit; he overawed Arrogance with Sedateness; he seized by the horn and overleaped low Violence; and he fairly swung Fortune round. The very high cannot rise much higher; the very low may: the truly great must have done it. This is not the doctrine, my friends, of the silkenly and lawnly religious; it wears the coarse texture of the fisherman, and walks uprightly and straightforward under it. . . . Hardly any man is ashamed of being inferior to his ancestors, although it is the very thing at which the great should blush, if indeed the great in general descended from the worthy. . . . He alone who maketh you wiser maketh you greater; and it is only by such an implement that Almighty God himself effects it. When he taketh away a man's wisdom, he taketh away his strength, his power over others and over himself. What help for him then? He may sit idly and swell his spleen, saying, 'Who is this? Who is that?' and at the question's end the spirit of inquiry dies away in him. It would not have been so, if, in happier hour, he had said within himself 'Who am I? 'What am I?' and had prosecuted the search in good earnest."

### Doctor Glaston on the Greeks and Romans.

"The Greeks conveyed all their wisdom into their theatre; their stages were churches and parliament-houses. . . William, I need not expatiate on Greek with thee, since thou knowest it not, but some crumbs of Latin are picked up by the callowest beaks. The Romans had, as thou findest, and have still, more taste for murder than morality, and, as they could not find heroes among them, looked for gladiators. Their only very high poet employed his elevation and strength to dethrone and debase the Deity. They had several others, who polished their language and pitched their instruments with admirable skill: several who glued over their thin and flimsy gaberdines many bright feathers from the wide-spread downs of Ionia, and the richly cultivated rocks of Attica. . . William, that which moveth the heart most is the best poetry; it comes nearest unto God, the source of all power."

### Sir Thomas Lucy's Comment thereon.

"Those ancients have little flesh upon the body poetical, and lack the savour that sufficeth. The Song of Solomon drowns all their voices: they seem but whistlers and guitar-players compared to a full-cheeked trumpeter; they standing under the

eaves in some dark lane, he upon a well-caparisoned stallion, tossing his mane and all his ribands to the sun. I doubt the doctor spake too fondly of the Greeks; they were giddy creatures. William, I am loth to be hard on them; but they please me not. There are those now living who could make them bite their nails to the quick, and turn green as grass with envy."

Doing Good by Speaking it.

"Never hold me unjust, sir knight, to Master Silas. Could I learn other good of him, I would freely say it; for we do good by speaking it, and none is easier. Even bad men are not bad men while they praise the just."

Beech-wood and Goose-feathers.

"He had ridden hard that morning, and had no cushion upon his seat as Sir Thomas had; and I have seen, in my time, that he who is seated on beech-wood hath very different thoughts and moralities from him who is seated on goose-feathers under doeskin."

Riches of our Daily Speech.

"How many of our words have more in them than we think of! Give a countryman a plough of silver, and he will plough with it all the season, and never know its substance. 'Tis thus with our daily speech. What riches lie hidden in the vulgar tongue of the poorest and most ignorant! What flowers of Paradise lie under our feet, with their beauties and parts undistinguished and undiscerned, from having been daily trodden on!"

The Necessity of Praise to the Poet.

"Praise giveth weight unto the wanting, and happiness giveth elasticity unto the heavy. As the mightier streams of the unexplored world, America, run languidly in the night, and await the sun on high to contend with him in strength and grandeur, so doth genius halt and pause in the thraldom of outspread darkness, and move onwards with all his vigour then only when creative light and jubilant warmth surround him."

That last is from the episode of Ethelbert. Among Doctor Glaston's students Willy Shakespeare had especially noticed one whose pale face, abstinence at table, cough, taciturnity and gentleness, seemed already to de-

clare him more than half a poet; and he had been struck by the arguments employed by the doctor to dissuade him from the poet's vocation. Such is their lofty tone that they have the effect of inviting even while they dissuade; and a something of doubt seems at last to arise also in the doctor himself, as he glances from Ethelbert to Shakespeare, and gets a hint from the light-hearted lad that peradventure poetry may be safely followed after all, provided only that to the poet himself it be but a pastime and pleasure.

"The things whereon thy whole soul brooded in its innermost recesses, and with all its warmth and energy, will pass unprized and unregarded, not only throughout thy lifetime, but long after. For the higher beauties of poetry are beyond the capacity, beyond the vision, of almost all. Once perhaps in half a century a single star is discovered, then named and registered, then mentioned by five studious men to five more; at last some twenty say, or repeat in writing, what they have heard about it. Other stars await other discoveries. Few and solitary and wide asunder are those who calculate their relative distances, their mysterious influences, their glorious magnitude, and their stupendous height. 'Tis so, believe me, and ever was so, with the truest and best poetry. Homer, they say, was blind; he might have been ere he died; that he sat among the blind, we are sure. Happy they who, like this young lad from Stratford, write poetry on the saddle-bow when their geldings are jaded, and keep the desk for better purposes."

On this everybody present turns to the woolstapler's son, and there is plenty of sneer and scoff at his cost; but Ethelbert, sparing him, only smiles and says:

"Be patient: from the higher heavens of poetry it is long before the radiance of the brightest star can reach the world below. We hear that one man finds out one beauty, another man finds out another, placing his observatory and instruments on the poet's grave. The worms must have eaten us before it is rightly known what we are. It is only when we are skeletons that we are boxed and ticketed, and prized and shown. Be it so. I shall not be tired of waiting."

Connected also with Ethelbert is a little story told him by Doctor Glaston of a ripe and promising scholar at St. John's, before whom a great career lay open, but who, suffering himself to be broken in spirit by an unfortunate passion, had fled to poetry from severer toil, and was found by the doctor himself one day on the banks of the Cherwell, "thought to have died broken-" hearted." What follows is supremely pathetic. In its pure and simple form this is the most arduous achievement of writing; and though in pathos no literature is so rich as the English, there is in the range of the language little that goes byond this.

"Remembering that his mother did abide one mile further on, I walked forward to the mansion and asked her what tidings she lately had received of her son. She replied, that having given up his mind to light studies, the fellows of the college would not elect him. . . 'I rated him, told him I was poor, and he knew it. He was stung, and threw himself upon my neck and wept. Twelve days have passed since, and only three rainy ones. I hear he has been seen upon the knoll yonder, but hither he hath not come. I trust he knows at last the value of time, and I shall be heartily glad to see him after this accession of knowledge. Twelve days, it is true, are rather a chink than a gap in time; yet, O gentle sir, they are that chink which makes the vase quite valueless. There are light words which may never be shaken off the mind they fall on. My child, who was hurt by me, will not let me see the marks.' 'Lady,' said I, 'none are left upon him. Be comforted. Thou shalt see him this hour. All that thy God hath not taken is yet thine.' She looked at me earnestly, and would have then asked something, but her voice failed her. There was no agony, no motion, save in the lips and cheeks. Being the widow of one who fought under Hawkins, she remembered his courage and sustained the shock, saying calmly, 'God's will be done. I pray that he find me as worthy as he findeth me willing to join them.' Now in her unearthly thoughts she had led her only son to the bosom of her husband; and in her spirit (which often is permitted to pass the gates of death with holy love) she left them both with

their Creator. The curate of the village sent those who should bring home the body; and some days afterwards he came unto me, beseeching me to write the epitaph. Being no friend to stone-cutters' charges, I entered not into biography, but wrote these few words:

JOANNES WELLERBY
LITERARUM QUÆSIVIT GLORIAM,
VIDET DEI."

In the verse before quoted as the Maid's Lament, from the scrap discovered in the young poacher's pocket, the sequel of the tale is told according to Willy's sense of retributive justice. Such connection of it with the story is not named, but very manifest.

Here we may shut the book. What turn the examination took finally, it does not need to say. Mr. Barnett can only explain the miracle of Master Willy's closing familiarity with Sir Thomas by remarking that great poets do mightily affect to have little poets under them, and little poets do forget themselves in great company. Unhappily just at the last a note of discord is struck by the introduction of the name of one Hannah Hathaway; and as Sir Thomas sees the lad bound out of his hall and thread the trees along his park like a greyhound-whelp after a leveret, he can but cry alack and well-a-day, that a respectable woolstapler's son should turn gipsy and poet for life!

Another glimpse of him is nevertheless given us in a memorandum written seventeen years later by the reporter of the examination, who at this date appends to it, upon the relation of a kinsman who is one of the retainers of the earl of Essex, not only a conference on the condition of Ireland between the earl and Master Edmund Spenser, which by the earl's order he had taken down, but also an account of the burial of Master Edmund shortly afterwards in Westminster-abbey when

Master Shakespeare himself attended. Ephraim's kinsman thus writes to him.

"Now I speak of poets, you will be in a maze at hearing that our townsman hath written a power of matter for the playhouse. Neither he nor the booksellers think it quite good enough to print; but I do assure you, on the faith of a Christian, it is not bad; and there is rare fun in the last thing of his about Venus, where a Jew, one Shiloh, is choused out of his money and his revenge. However, the best critics and the greatest lords find fault, and very justly, in the words:

'Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimen-
' sions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with
' the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same
' means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a
' Christian is?'

Surely this is very unchristianlike. Nay, for supposition sake, suppose it to be true, was it his business to tell the people so? Was it his duty to ring the crier's bell and cry to them, 'The sorry Jews are quite as much men as you are'? The church luckily has let him alone for the present; and the queen winks upon it. The best defence he can make for himself is, that it comes from the mouth of a Jew, who says many other things as abominable. Master Greene may overrate him; but Master Greene declares that if William goes on improving and taking his advice, it will be desperate hard work in another seven years to find so many as half-a-dozen chaps equal to him within the liberties."

As delightfully sketched is the scene at Spenser's burial, and there is nothing in the *Conversations* more beautiful than the Conference of Essex and Spenser. The time is immediately after that Irish rebellion in which Spenser's house, his infant child being in it, had been burnt to the ground; and Essex, believing that only his house had perished, and questioning him as of an ordinary sorrow, adds to even the dreadfulness of what waits to be disclosed by previous touches of half-playful raillery. Was his house indeed so dear to him? It was indeed, is Spenser's answer. "Innocent hopes were

" my gravest cares, and my playfullest fancy was with
" kindly wishes. Ah, surely of all cruelties the worst
" is to extinguish our kindness. Mine is gone: I love
" the people and the land no longer. My lord, ask me
" not about them; I may speak injuriously." Essex still cannot guess the grief which no council, no queen, no Essex can repair; but he sees that it is grave, and respects it. "Nay, kiss not my hand: he whom God
" smiteth hath God with him. In His presence what
" am I?" That Spenser's grief is for the death of some one dear to him, Essex knows now, yet still talks to him cheerily of endurance and hopefulness, for that every day, every hour of the year, there are hundreds mourning what he mourns. "O, no, no, no!" cries the other. "Calamities there are around us; calami-
" ties there are all over the earth; calamities there are
" in all seasons; but none in any season, none in any
" place like mine." "So," rejoins Essex, "say all fa-
" thers, so say all husbands. Look at any old mansion-
" house, and let the sun shine as gloriously as it may
" on the golden vanes, or the arms recently quartered
" over the gateway, or the embayed window, and on
" the happy pair that haply is toying at it; neverthe-
" less thou mayest say that of a certainty the same fa-
" bric hath seen much sorrow within its chambers, and
" heard many wailings: and each time this was the
" heaviest stroke of all. Funerals have passed along
" through the stout-hearted knights upon the wainscot,
" and amid the laughing nymphs upon the arras. Old
" servants have shaken their heads, as if somebody had
" deceived them, when they found that beauty and no-
" bility could perish. Edmund, the things that are too
" true pass by us as if they were not true at all; and
" when they have singled us out, then only do they

"strike us." Supremely beautiful, surely; yet the passion that bursts forth when all the truth is told very far transcends it. But this must be read in the Conference itself.

Landor justly valued it, and was in great alarm on hearing from England that the friends who had charge of the printing could not understand why the same volume should contain both it and the Examination. Expressly for this, he wrote to Lady Blessington (11th Oct. 1834), "I have written an Introduction which "quite satisfied me; which hardly anything does upon "the whole, though everything in part. Pray relieve "me, then, from this teazing anxiety, for the Exami- "nation and the Conference if disjoined would break "my heart." He had his wish; yet well-nigh broke his heart notwithstanding, on seeing the printed book. "I hope," he wrote to Southey, "my publisher sent "you the *Examination of Shakespeare*—alas that I should "say it! the very worst-printed book that ever fell "into my hands. '*Volubly* discreet'! 'slipped into' for "'stripped unto'! 'Sit mute' for 'stand,' with many "many others! And then there are words I never "use: such as 'utmost;' I always write 'uttermost.' "In fact the misprints amount to 40 of the grosser "kind, and I know not how many of the smaller!" He added that if a friendly report of the thing (my notice of it) had not put him in good humour before it reached him, he would have flung it into the fire then and there, and dismissed it from his thoughts for ever.

The friendly report had outstripped the volume in Florence by some days, and when the single copy afterwards arrived he had to lend it round to all his circle. He carefully kept the little notes from successive applicants for the loan, among them Milnes, Brown, Leckie,

Kirkup, and the novelist Mr. James, also for the time his neighbour; and the flutter of pleasure and praise among them had been not without pleasure for himself, and a flutter of encouragement too. "I did not believe "such kind things would be said of me for at least a "century to come." The effect survived even the less hopeful side of the picture; and when Crabb Robinson wrote from London (10th Feb. 1835) that the Shakespeare book would have fallen dead-born but for one review, that, though this had proclaimed its beauties, others had found it unintelligible, and that a paper of high character had thrust it aside as "a mere silly imi-"tation of obsolete law proceedings and phrases," Landor only replied to this part of the letter, that he was busy with something else which he hoped might have better fortune.

The "something else" was *Pericles and Aspasia*, also written for the most part in this last year of residence in Italy which it helps to make memorable.

## VIII. Pericles and Aspasia.

Landor to Southey. (Early in 1835.)

"Since we met, since indeed we wrote, many things have occurred in your family on which I wish it were my good fortune to offer you only my congratulations. But grief is as pure an offering, and far more costly. I need not tell you that I have grieved, and not for an hour or two, at your afflictions. Nor did it satisfy my mind, nor can it yours, that you still have more reason for contentment, and higher sources both of consolation and delight, than any man upon earth. The human heart was never made for listening, and even this truth will find but tardy admittance into yours. I am so disgusted with politics and politicians that I never read a newspaper, but I hear that some respect has been shown to the services you have rendered the country by your writings. Poor Coleridge has not lived for the restoration of what was taken from him. I wish

he had indulged less in metaphysics. Had I seen him a second time, I would have asked him whether the principal merit of the Germans does not consist in nomenclature and arrangement. Strongly do I imagine to myself that I have seen all their new truths, as they call them, in old authors. Of the moderns, as far as I can judge (for such reading tires me like walking knee-deep in saw-dust), Hobbes is the most acute, and Locke the most logical. My friend Mr. Robinson has not told me whether Charles Lamb has left any writings behind him. Nothing can be more delightful than the *Essays of Elia;* and his sister's style is perfect. I have read *Mrs. Leicester's School* four times, and each time with equal if not fresh delight. She is now far advanced in years, and no friend can be in the place of a brother to her. He was a most affectionate creature, pleasurable and even-tempered. Him too I saw but once, and yet I think of him as if I had known him forty years.

> Once, and once only, have I seen thy face,
> Elia! once only has thy tripping tongue
> Run o'er my breast, yet never has been left
> Impression on it stronger or more sweet.
> Cordial old man! what youth was in thy years,
> What wisdom in thy levity, what truth
> In every utterance of that purest soul!
> Few are the spirits of the glorified
> I'd spring to earlier at the gate of Heaven.

Is there anything yet left upon the earth? or is there only a void space between you and me? . . . I hear you are writing a History of the Moors. Surely there must be valuable manuscripts in Fez and Morocco, perhaps too in Madrid. Have you ever heard that the library of the Greek Emperors is still preserved in the Seraglio? I do not trouble my head about Menander, poor Parr's regret; for, if he were only worth two Terences, he was only worth three farthings; but I would gladly see a volume of Simonides, and anything beyond the few words that Thucydides has given us of Pericles. I began a conversation between Pericles and Aspasia, and thought I could do better by a series of letters between them, not uninterrupted; for the letters should begin with their first friendship, should give place to their conversations afterwards, and recommence on their supposed separation during the plague of Athens. Few materials are extant: Bayle, Menage, Thucydides, Plutarch, and hardly anything more. So much the better. The coast is clear: there are

neither rocks nor weeds before me. But I am writing as if I had not torn to pieces all their love-letters and orations! Few were completed."

So Landor wrote in the letter, the last addressed to his friend from Italy, which Mr. Milnes brought over as an introduction to the poet-laureate. But even while he wrote, the subject of Pericles had recast itself in his mind; in the few more months that remained to him at the villa Gherardescha, it was brought nearly to completion; and though, having carried the manuscript to England in the December of 1835, it was published while he resided there, it is to Italy the book belongs. Here therefore, in the same manner and for the same reason as in his former books, I proceed to give account of it.

The first notion mentioned to Southey, of including conversations in his plan, was thrown over afterwards; and he restricted himself to a series of imaginary letters, opening at the arrival of Aspasia in Athens from her native Miletus, and closing at the death of Pericles in the third year of the Peloponnesian war. He interspersed occasional speeches; and relieved his theme, which he also adorns and illustrates, by a variety of fragments of verse, the most thoroughly Greek that any Englishman has written. It was a daring choice to select a time which within the compass of a single life took in the lives of the foremost of the ancient poets, philosophers, historians, and men of action, by whom humanity and the human race have been exalted; and it was trebly daring to advance to such a task, trusting solely to the force of his genius and unassisted but by the treasures of his memory. "In writing my *Pericles* "*and Aspasia*," he says, in a letter of the 27th April 1836, "I had no books to consult. The characters,

"thoughts, and actions, are all fictions. Pericles was "somewhat less amiable, Aspasia somewhat less virtu- "ous, Alcibiades somewhat less sensitive; but here I "could represent him so, being young, and before his "character was displayed." Beside these, his only leading persons are Aspasia's friend and countrywoman Cleone, and the philosopher Anaxagoras; the figures in his foreground being wisely few, but their grouping and accessories such as to surround with all the greatness of their age his hero and heroine, who vie with each other in appreciation of the genius that is present with them, and in their knowledge of the glories of the past. There are several exquisite episodes; and that of Xeniades of Miletus, the rejected lover of Aspasia, himself as vainly beloved by Cleone, invests the latter with a softness and grace hardly second to Aspasia's own. These two women fill the book to overflowing with sensibility and tenderness, insomuch that one of Landor's American admirers* has singled it out as in this respect preëminent over all his writings, "a book "that we are frequently forced to drop, and surrender "ourselves to the visions and memories, soft or sad, "which its words awaken, and cause to pass before the "mind." Yet a book also that perfectly sustains the interest which it vividly awakens. Not mean is the exploit when a writer can satisfy the most exacting scholarship while he revives the forms or imitates the language of antiquity. But here we have something more, resembling rather antiquity itself than the most scholarly and successful presentation of it. We are in the theatre when *Prometheus* is played; we are in the house of Aspasia when Socrates and Aristophanes are

* My old friend Mr. Hillard of Boston, who published in that city a dozen years ago a volume of "Selections from Landor."

there; Thucydides is shown to us in the promise of his youth; we see the last of the triumphs of Sophocles; and in speeches and letters of Pericles upon the great affairs he is conducting, history acts herself again. The political antagonism of Cimon, and the War with its sad disasters, usher in the mournful close. Amid the horrors of the plague the farewell to Athens and Aspasia is written; and over a sun that is grandly setting the fiery star of Alcibiades is seen to rise. A magnificent subject very nobly handled. Landor had chosen for trial the bow of Ulysses, and it obeyed his hand.

Something to show manner and treatment must be added, but it will not express the charm that overspreads the book as with a wide and sunny atmosphere of clear bright air. It is only to be understood from reading it how intensely Greek the mind of Landor was. Here his faults became beauties. What one inclines to object to very often in his writing, that his characters make too little allowance for human passions, that they leave too little room for what in mechanics is called friction, that, as during all his own life their inventor and maker was apt to do, they too much believe what they wish, and too readily suppose to be practicable what appears to be desirable, is no objection here. What we for ever associate with the Greeks, of buoyant grace, elaborate refinement, precision of form, and imagination more sensuous and fanciful than sentimental or spiritual, we shall find always in most perfect expression where the impulsive predominates over the reflective part of the mind. It is a small thing to add for an illustration, but there are two or three lines in the first letter that exhibit what I say of the Greek spirit showing itself in the very lightest touch, where As-

pasia, after reaching Athens, describes to Cleone the olive-tree itself as looking beautiful "when the sea-breezes "blow. It looks, in its pliable and undulating branches, "irresolute as Ariadne when she was urged to fly, and "pale as Orythia when she was borne away."

The book really opens at a performance of *Prometheus* in the Athenian theatre, to which, through the assembled crowd of youths, philosophers, magistrates, and generals, Aspasia in the dress of a boy has made her way alone; when with such painful force are her sympathies affected by the actors in the scene, by the champion of the human race, by his antagonist Jove and his creator Æschylus, that she sinks from her seat. "He had resisted in silence and disdain the cruelest "tortures that Almightiness could inflict; and now "arose the nymphs of Ocean, which heaved its vast "waves before us; and now they descended with open "arms and sweet benign countenances, and spake "with pity; and the insurgent heart was mollified and "quelled. I sobbed; I dropt." As many eyes had been directed to her meanwhile as to the competitor of the gods, and the purpose for which she had left her native Miletus was already well-nigh accomplished. She is conducted to the presence of Pericles.

By any one desirous of knowing the heights to which criticism might ascend, if with elevated purpose practised as an art and not indiscriminately used as a dagger or daubing-brush, that description of the performance of *Prometheus* would be well worth study. But nothing great is criticised in this book without receiving from what is said of it new celebrity and charm, and upon nothing little is anger thrown needlessly away. In the passages I am about to give it will be also seen that the mind of Landor was not more Greek than his style was

English, and that this here is at its very best; perfect in form, solid in substance, in expression always concise and pure, and often piercing and radiant as light itself. It was said of the book by one who was herself a fine Greek scholar (Miss Barrett: 21 August 1839), that if he had written only this, it would have shown him to be "of all living writers the most unconventional in "thought and word, the most classical because the freest "from mere classicalism, the most Greek because pre-"eminently and purely English, and the fittest of all "to achieve what Plato calls a triumph in eloquence, "the successful commendation of Athens in the midst "of the Peloponnesus."

PERICLES ON HOMER.

"Some tell us that there were twenty Homers, some deny that there was ever one. We are perpetually labouring to destroy our delight, our composure, our devotion to superior power. Of all the animals upon earth we least know what is good for us. My opinion is, that what is best for us is our admiration of good. No man living venerates Homer more than I do. He was the only author I read when a boy. . . He then nourished my fancy, animated my dreams, awoke me in the morning, marched with me, sailed with me, taught me morals, taught me language, taught me music and philosophy and war. . . His beautiful creation lies displayed before us; the creator is hidden in his own splendour. I can more easily believe that his hand constructed the whole than that twenty men could be found, at nearly the same time, each of genius sufficient for the twentieth part; because in many centuries there arose not a single one capable of such a production as that portion."

HOMER LIKELY TO REMAIN UNKNOWN.

"The heavenly bodies may keep their secrets two or three thousand years yet; but one or other will betray them to some wakeful favourite, some Endymion beyond Latmos, perhaps in regions undiscovered, certainly in uncalculated times. Men will know more of them than they will ever know of Homer. Our knowledge on this miracle of our species is unlikely to increase."

### Hesiod and Homer.

"Hesiod, who is also a Bœotian, is admirable for the purity of his life and soundness of his precepts, but there is hardly a trace of poetry in his ploughed field. I find in all his writings but one verse worth transcribing, and that only for the melody:

'In a soft meadow and on vernal flowers.'

I do not wonder he was opposed to Homer. What an advantage to the enemies of greatness (that is, to mankind) to be able to match one so low against one so lofty!"

### Aristophanes.

"Aristophanes, in my opinion, might have easily been the first lyric poet now living, except Sophocles and Euripides; he chose rather to be the bitterest satirist. How many, adorned with all the rarities of intellect, have stumbled on the entrance into life, and have made a wrong choice on the very thing which was to determine their course for ever! This is among the reasons, and perhaps is the principal one, why the wise and the happy are two distinct classes of men."

### Sappho and the Tragedians.

"Her finest ode is not to be compared to many choruses in the tragedians. We know that Sappho felt acutely; yet Sappho is never pathetic. Euripides and Sophocles are not remarkable for the purity, the intensity, or the fidelity of their loves, yet they touch, they transfix the heart. Her imagination, her whole soul, is absorbed in her own breast: *she* is the prey of the passions; *they* are the lords and masters."

### The Prometheus and the Iliad.

"I agree with you that the conception of such a drama is in itself a stupendous effort of genius; that the execution is equal to the conception; that the character of Prometheus is more heroic than any in heroic poetry; and that no production of the same extent is so magnificent and so exalted. But the Iliad is not a region—it is a continent; and you might as well compare this prodigy to it as the cataract of the Nile to the Ocean. In the one we are overpowered by the compression and burst of the element; in the other we are carried over an immensity of space, bounding the earth, not bounded by her, and having nothing above but the heavens."

### Pericles on his Libellers.

"Why should I be angry with the writers of comedy? Is it because they tell me of the faults I find in myself? Surely not; for he who finds them in himself may be quite certain that others have found them in him long before, and have shown forbearance in the delay. Is it because I am told of those I have not discovered in me? Foolish indeed were this. I am to be angry, it seems, because a man forewarns me that I have enemies in my chamber, who will stab me when they find me asleep, and because he helps me to catch them and disarm them. But it is such an indignity to be ridiculed! I incurred a greater when I threw myself into the way of ridicule: a greater still should I suffer, if I tried whether it could be remedied by resentment. Ridicule often parries resentment, but resentment never yet parried ridicule."

### Little Poets.

"He is among the many poets who never make us laugh or weep; among the many whom we take into the hand like pretty insects, turn them over, look at them for a moment, and toss them into the grass again. The earth swarms with these; they live their season, and others similar come into life the next."

### Sculpture, Painting, and Poetry.

"Painting by degrees will perceive her advantages over Sculpture; but if there are paces betwen Sculpture and Painting, there are parasangs between Painting and Poetry. The difference is that of a lake confined by mountains, and a river running on through all the varieties of scenery, perpetual and unimpeded. Sculpture and Painting are moments of life; Poetry is life itself, and everything around it and above it."

### Life.

"It is a casket not precious in itself, but valuable in proportion to what fortune, or industry, or virtue, has placed within it."

### True Love.

"At last, Aspasia, you love indeed. The perfections of your beloved interest you less than the imperfections, which you no sooner take up for reprehension, than you admire, embrace, and defend. Happy, happy Aspasia!"

LITTLE AGLAE

*To her Father, on her Statue being called like her.*

"Father, the little girl we see
Is not, I fancy, so like me;
You never hold her on your knee.

When she came home the other day
You kiss'd her; but I cannot say
She kiss'd you first and ran away."

ASPASIA ON HER NURSE'S DEATH.

"Ah poor Demophile, she remembered me, then! How sorry I am I cannot tell her I remember her! Cleone, there are little things that leave no little regrets. I might have said kind words, and perhaps have done kind actions, to many who now are beyond the reach of them."

A PHILOSOPHER'S JUDGMENT OF PERICLES.

"Much is wanting to constitute his greatness. He possesses, it is true, more comprehensiveness and concentration than any living; perhaps more than any since Solon; but he thinks that power over others is better than power over himself; as if a mob were worth a man, and an acclamation were worth a Pericles."

ANAXAGORAS IN AGE AND EXILE.

"Believe me, I am happy. . . . I am with you still; I study with you, just as before, although nobody talks aloud in the school-room. This is the pleasantest part of life. Oblivion throws her light coverlet over our infancy; and soon after we are out of the cradle we forget how soundly we had been slumbering, and how delightful were our dreams. Toil and pleasure contend for us almost the instant we rise from it; and weariness follows whichever has carried us away. We stop awhile, look around us, wonder to find we have completed the circle of existence, fold our arms, and fall asleep again.

ADVICE ON THE WRITING OF HISTORY.

"We are growing too loquacious both on the stage and off. We make disquisitions which render us only more and more dim-sighted, and excursions that only consume our stores. . . . The field of history should not merely be well tilled, but well peopled. None is delightful to me, or interesting, in which I

find not as many illustrious names as have a right to enter it. We might as well in a drama place the actors behind the scenes, and listen to the dialogue there, as in a history push valiant men back, and protrude ourselves with husky disputations. Show me rather how great projects were executed, great advantages gained, and great calamities averted. Show me the generals and the statesmen who stood foremost, that I may bend to them in reverence; tell me their names, that I may repeat them to my children. Teach me whence laws were introduced, upon what foundation laid, by what custody guarded, in what inner keep preserved. Let the books of the treasury lie closed as religiously as the Sibyl's; leave weights and measures in the market-place, Commerce in the harbour, the Arts in the light they love, Philosophy in the shade: place History on her rightful throne, and at the sides of her Eloquence and War."

### The Trojan War and other Historic Myths.

"We make a bad bargain when we change poetry for truth in the affairs of ancient times, and by no means a good one in any. Remarkable men of remote ages are collected together out of different countries within the same period, and perform simultaneously the same action. On an accumulation of obscure deeds arises a wild spirit of poetry; and images and names burst forth and spread themselves, which carry with them something like enchantment, far beyond the infancy of nations. What was vague imagination settles at last and is received for history. It is difficult to effect and idle to attempt the separation: it is like breaking off a beautiful crystallisation from the vault of some intricate and twilight cavern, out of mere curiosity to see where the secretion terminates and the rock begins."

### Verses by a Philosopher.

"Pleasures! away; they please no more.
Friends! are they what they were before?
Loves! they are very idle things,
The best about them are their wings.
The dance! 'tis what a bear can do.
Music! I hate your music too.
Whene'er these witnesses that time
Hath snatcht the chaplet from our prime
Are call'd by Nature, as we go
With eye more wary, step more slow,

And will be heard and noted down,
However we may fret and frown,—
Shall we desire to leave the scene
Where all our former joys had been?
No, 'twere ungrateful and unwise!
But when die down our charities
For human weal and human woes,
Then is the time our eyes should close."

THE OTHER SIDE TO THE "SI VIS ME FLERE."

"Homer, in himself, is subject to none of the passions; but he sends them all forth on his errands, with as much precision and velocity as Apollo his golden arrows. The hostile Gods, the very Fates themselves, must have wept with Priam in the tent before Achilles: Homer stands unmoved."

TRUE WIFE.

"If he loves me, the merit is not mine; the fault will be, if he ceases."

LOVE.

"Like the ocean, love embraces the earth; and by love, as by the ocean, whatever is sordid and unsound is borne away."

ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

"The largest heart, O Cleone, is that which only one can rest upon or impress; the purest is that which dares to call itself impure; the kindest is that which shrinks rather at his own inhumanity than at another's."

PRIDE AND DELICACY.

"There are proud men of so much delicacy that it almost conceals their pride, and perfectly excuses it."

REALLY RESTLESS MEN.

"I do believe, Aspasia, that studious men who look so quiet are the most restless men in existence."

CAUTION FROM A PHILOSOPHER.

"Be cautious, O Aspasia, of discoursing on philosophy. Is it not in philosophy as in love? the more we have of it, and the less we talk about it, the better."

STUDY.

"Study is the bane of boyhood, the aliment of youth, the indulgence of manhood, and the restorative of age."

### Youth.

"There is something like enchantment in the very sound of the word *youth*, and the calmest heart, at every season of life, beats in double time to it."

### Monuments.

"The monument of the greatest man should be only a bust and a name. If the name alone is insufficient to illustrate the bust, let them both perish."

### Tears.

"Tears, O Aspasia, do not dwell long upon the cheeks of youth. Rain drops easily from the bud, rests on the bosom of the maturer flower, and breaks down that one only which hath lived its day."

### Deaths of Friends.

"We both are young; and yet we have seen several who loved us pass away; and we never can live over again as we lived before. A portion of our lives is consumed by the torch we follow at their funerals. We enter into another state of existence, resembling indeed and partaking of the former, but another! it contains the substance of the same sorrows, the shadow of the same joys. Alas, how true are the words of the old poet:

> We lose a life in every friend we lose,
> And every death is painful but the last."

### A Mother on her Child's Companionship.

"Where on earth is there so much society as in a beloved child? He accompanies me in my walks, gazes into my eyes for what I am gathering from books, tells me more and better things than they do, and asks me often what neither I nor they can answer. When he is absent I am filled with reflections; when he is present I have room for none beside what I receive from him. The charms of his childhood bring me back to the delights of mine, and I fancy I hear my own words in a sweeter voice. Will he—O how I tremble at the mute oracle of futurity!—will he ever be as happy as I have been?"

### Music and Memory.

"When Pericles is too grave and silent, I usually take up my harp and sing. . . . 'That instrument,' said he, 'is the rod

of Hermes; it calls up the spirits from below, or conducts them back again to Elysium. With what ecstasy do I throb and quiver under those refreshing showers of sound!'

> Come, sprinkle me soft music o'er the breast,
> Bring me the varied colours into light
> That now obscurely on its tablet rest,
> Show me its flowers and figures fresh and bright.
>
> Waked at thy voice and touch, again the chords
> Restore what restless years had moved away,
> Restore the glowing cheeks, the tender words,
> Youth's short-lived spring and pleasure's summer-day."

Extracts express an original book badly, whether in matter or manner, although the above have some interest in themselves; but the three scenes in which Aspasia completes the story of Agamemnon it will be best to leave untouched. The first, wherein the shade of Iphigeneia, unconscious of her mother's double crime, meets on his descent from death the shade of her father, by whose hand she had herself perished, is for the originality of its conception unsurpassed; and the second and third, representing the fate of Clytemnestra and the madness of Orestes, are, in my judgment, for the intensity and vividness of their dramatic expression, unequalled in the dramatic writings of our time. "My "Agamemnon," wrote Landor (14th April 1836), "was "composed in bed, all night and half the morning, on "my recollecting what defects the Greek tragedians "had left in their management of the house of Atreus. "And yet it is on this ground that their laurels have "grown so high. It is hardly worth while to do any-"thing admirable, for men's admiration will spring from "something worse. Critics admire the *Agamemnon* of "Æschylus far above his *Prometheus*. . . . There is," he wrote in the same letter, "only one thought of an-"other man beside myself in the whole book, and this

"I have given twice, wishing it to be the one that "weighed most with Pericles—that he never caused an "Athenian to put on mourning. In the rest, prose and "poetry, wherever I detected a similarity to another, "I struck out the sentence, however loth, and however "certain that it *would have been* mine. But, alas, the "air we breathe is breathed by millions; so are the "thoughts. They both act as new organs, and both "diversely." Though scrupulous not to commit the offence, he could not avoid the charge; and the reader will be amused to learn the effect hereafter produced by it. Suffice it now to say that the book was not published until the spring of 1836; and that in the interval Landor had left the villa Gherardescha, and taken up his residence in England.

## IX. Self-Banishment from Fiesole.

"I leave thee, beauteous Italy! no more
From the high terraces, at even-tide,
To look supine into thy depths of sky,
Thy golden moon between the cliff and me,
Or thy dark spires of fretted cypresses
Bordering the channel of the milky-way.
Fiesole and Valdarno must be dreams
Hereafter, and my own lost Affrico
Murmur to me but in the poet's song.
I did believe (what have I not believed?)
Weary with age, but unopprest by pain,
To close in thy soft clime my quiet day,
And rest my bones in the mimosa's shade.
Hope! hope! few ever cherisht thee so little,
Few are the heads thou hast so rarely raised;
But thou didst promise this, and all was well:
For we are fond of thinking where to lie
When every pulse hath ceast, when the lone heart
Can lift no aspiration . . Over all
The smiles of Nature shed a potent charm,
And light us to our chamber at the grave." W. S. L.

"Among the unaccountable things in me, and many "are so even to myself, is this, that I admired Pindar "somewhat more in youth than in what ought to be a "graver age. However, his wisdom, his high-minded-"ness, and his excellent selection of topics, in which "no writer of prose or verse ever equalled him, render "him worthy to spend the evening with one who has "passed the earlier part of the day with Dante." His old schoolfellow Carey had visited Italy, and to him these words were addressed, thanking him for his translation of Pindar. What also the course of my narrative requires that I should now relate, the reader must be content to accept among the "unaccountable things." No account can as yet be given of it which he will be able to regard as entirely intelligible.

In April 1835 Landor had left his villa, and was in Florence waiting a letter from Armitage Brown, at this time on his way to England. A few nights before his departure, when bidden to his last dinner at the villa, he had been present at the scene that had driven Landor from Fiesole; and in justification of this extreme step an account of what he witnessed had been asked from him. "It was scarcely possible for me," he wrote from Genoa on the 4th of April,* "to make "such a reply as your letter required before I quitted "Florence. As we have a day's rest here I avail my-"self of it." He grieves to have to be ungracious to one who had uniformly treated him with the utmost courtesy and kindness; "but there are certain words, "which, once uttered, whether directed towards my-"self or my friend, cancel every obligation; nor can "I affect to feel their power lessened on account of "their being uttered by the wife of my friend." He

* The letter is addressed "Post restante, Florence."

then describes language used in presence of the elder children, which had constituted the unpardonable offence, and which he declares to have had no provocation. "It commenced by upbraiding you for conduct "excessively bad towards herself; but her own state- "ment, as well as your answer, certainly proved that "you were blameless, and I ventured to point out her "mistake. Unfortunately no attention was paid to "either of us; and still more unfortunately—" But the story is an old and familiar one, that it is the very consciousness of our own injustice which will make us add to the injury we inflict, and that, by doing all we can to aggravate the wrong we commit, we seem to justify ourselves for committing it.

"I am ashamed to write down the words, but to hear them was painful. . . . I am afraid my patience would have left me in a tenth part of the time; but you, to my astonishment, sat with a composed countenance, never once making use of an uncivil expression, unless the following may be so considered, when, after about an hour, she seemed exhausted: 'I beg, madam, you 'will, if you think proper, proceed; as I made up my mind, from 'the first, to endure at least twice as much as you have been yet 'pleased to speak.' After dinner, when I saw her leave the room, I followed, and again pointed out her mistake; when she readily agreed with me, saying she was convinced you were not to blame. At this I could not forbear exclaiming, 'Well, then?' in the hope of bearing back to you some slight acknowledgment of regret on her part: but in this I was disappointed. You conclude your letter with 'I feel confident you will write a few lines, excul- 'pating me if you think I have acted with propriety in very try- 'ing circumstances; and condemning me if I acted with violence, 'precipitation, or rudeness.' For more than eleven years I have been intimate with you, and, during that time, frequenting your house, I never once saw you behave towards Mrs. Landor otherwise than with the most gentlemanly demeanour, while your love for your children was unbounded. I was always aware that you gave entire control into her hands over the children, the servants, and the management of the house; and when

vexed or annoyed at anything, I could not but remark that you were in the habit of requesting the cause to be remedied or removed, as a favour to yourself. All this I have more than once repeated to Mrs. Landor in answer to her accusations against you, which I could never well comprehend. When I have elsewhere heard you accused of being a violent man, I have frankly acknowledged it; limiting however your violence to persons guilty of meanness, roguery, or duplicity; by which I meant, and said, that you utterly lost your temper with the Italians."

It will not be supposed that these sentences, or even the entire contents of the letter, if it had been possible to quote them, are thought by me to afford the justification for which they were sought by Landor and written by his friend: but what they tell has the value of suggesting much that the writer had not the power to tell; the "gentlemanly demeanour" and the "unbounded "love" are significant of more than was intended by such contrasted expressions; and in the scene referred to, taken at its worst, even in the step that followed, extravagant as it was, the reader of former passages of this work* may possibly see but the sequel of what could not ever have been expected to have favourable issue. If, at the same time, I have delineated fairly the character it was my purpose to express, it will seem that no injury so fatal could be done, nor any offence so unpardonable be committed, as one that might wound such a man in his self-love by lowering him in his own opinion before others, with whom especially he desired to stand well. He fled from his young wife at Jersey, not because of her expressions, but because her little sister heard them;† and he had now the same reason for deserting his home at Fiesole, without, alas, the same excuse for returning. It was a

* Ante, i. 323-326, 411-413.

† Ante, i. 411-412.

home that must in future have always listeners for such disputes; and perhaps, with every day that now passed, disposed more and more themselves to take part in them. "It was not willingly," he wrote to Southey, "that I left Tuscany and my children. There " was but one spot upon earth on which I had fixed " my heart, and four objects on which my affection " rested. That they might not hear every day such " language as no decent person should ever hear once, " nor despise both parents, I left the only delight of " my existence." The conclusion nevertheless is forced upon us, that it was more for his own sake than for theirs the extraordinary determination was taken. He could not believe, if we are to trust the language always afterwards used by him, that, with his own mere withdrawal from his home, all indecency of language or temper was to cease there for ever; and the more he condemns what had become unbearable by himself, the more he condemns himself for having left his children exposed to it. There is no escape from this difficulty.

It is true that attempts were made for him by friends, in which he took part more or less eagerly, to induce at least the two elder children to join him in England; he had settled so far as to engage to meet them at Verona in the hope of their return with him; in negotiations having this object in view, or similar but more partial concessions, Francis Hare and his relative Mrs. Dashwood, Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, his friend Ablett, and others very warmly engaged; there were even proposals for his own return urged in the year of his flight by his wife's relatives in England, pressed upon him two years afterwards by Crabb Robinson when visiting Italy with Wordsworth, and revived, at

the instance of Mrs. Landor herself,* when Kenyon was at Fiesole with Mr. Bezzi two years later; but to these last overtures the only answer was a peremptory negative, and, under objections that would have seemed to me very far from insuperable, all the other endeavours broke down. I am bound to add, at the same time, that to an excessively urgent appeal from Mr. Ravenshaw, who had married one of his wife's sisters, he made detailed reply of such a character as to elicit from his brother-in-law frank admission of the strength of the grounds on which his refusal to comply was based; nor was the application from that quarter ever renewed. "I am sure you are wanted at home," wrote Crabb Robinson to him from the villa itself in June 1837, "and that your presence might have the happiest effect on the character of your children. It might be "decisive as to the happiness of your daughter." "I "wish to Heaven Julia were with you," Mr. James had written to him in the same month of the previous year, 1836. "It would be a comfort to you and a blessing to "her; for Italy, and Italy without a father's care, is a "sad land for young fair woman." Between these dates I ventured myself to make inquiry if there were any chance of his consenting to return; and his reply gave me no hope whatever. The condition he would have imposed rendered it equally impossible that he should rejoin his children in Italy, or that, with the decision at which the elder ones had arrived respecting their mother, they should join him in England. He showed

* "Their mother" (I quote Mr. Bezzi's letter to Landor, 19th Nov. 1839), "as you well know, does not, perhaps cannot, exercise any "wholesome control over them" (the children); "she plainly admits "this: and adduces it as a reason, among others, why she wishes and "hopes you will return."

me at the time, I well remember, a then unfinished Conversation in which he had just written these sentences: "Negligence of order and propriety, of duties " and civilities, long endured, often deprecated, ceases " to be tolerable, when children grow up and are in dan- " ger of following the example. It often happens that, " if a man unhappy in the married state were to disclose " the manifold causes of his uneasiness, they would be " found, by those who were beyond their influence, " to be of such a nature as rather to excite derision " than sympathy. The waters of bitterness do not fall " on his head in a cataract, but through a colander; " one however like the vases of the Danaides, per- " forated only for replenishment. We know scarcely " the vestibule of a house of which we fancy we have " penetrated all the corners. We know not how griev- " ously a man may have suffered, long before the calum- " nies of the world befell him as he reluctantly left " his house-door. There are women from whom inces- " sant tears of anger swell forth at imaginary wrongs; " but of contrition for their own delinquencies not one." Arrangements continued to be suggested, and there were even active measures on foot to give them trial, going so far in one instance as the engagement of a house near Plymouth in which the mother might reside with all the children, the father living in lodgings near;* but

* The unceasing efforts of Francis Hare and his cousin Mrs. Dashwood brought matters thus far. The latter wrote in November 1837 to Landor's sister Elizabeth that he had consented to allow the whole family to come to England in the following April. "A more affec- " tionate letter than usual from Arnold, and a most kind and sen- " sible one from my excellent cousin Francis Hare, strongly advising " the step for his children's sake, have led to this." Landor had written to her: "I shall tell him (F.H.) that they may all come next " April, on condition that I never see her." Of course it all went off; and in the next following month, at the end of a letter describ-

I believe his own resolve to have been now so decisively and so finally taken that at this point I quit the subject. Whatever further illustration it receives in these pages will be from circumstances or allusions unavoidably incident to the narrative.

In the month when he quitted Florence he had a letter from Francis Hare, at this time in Rome, full of pleasure and wonder at his *Shakespeare;* telling him his genius had become stronger of wing under the heights of Fiesole; hoping that his volume of unpublished Conversations had been found; and suggesting as a subject for a new conversation to be added to it, the meeting and dinner of Pope Julius the Second, during his flight from Rome, with the two cardinals that succeeded him as popes Leo and Clement. It was a good subject, but an unlucky time; and as to the missing Conversations Landor had to reply even less favourably. He had just received a letter from Mr. Willis giving doubtful hope of their recovery. "I have to beg," said this characteristic effusion, "that you will lay to *the charge* " *of England* a part of the annoyance you will feel about " your books and MS. I was never more flattered by " a commission, and I have never fulfilled one so ill. " They went to America viâ Leghorn, and I expected " fully to have arrived in New York a month or two " after them. But here I am still, and here I fear I " shall be for six months or a year to come. I will " write immediately to the United States for them."

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ing a proposal of Dr. Conolly's to restore "Shakespeare's chapel," to which he had subscribed five pounds, he named Mrs. Dashwood's scheme to me as a thing of the past, speaking at the same time very highly of her kindness. "The concern she takes in my family is " infinitely greater than that of all the rest of the world: and the " last thing I forget will be that."

England was the culprit for having treated Mr. N. P. Willis so well that he could not find it in his heart to quit the entertaining land. He was become Anglomane. "I think no king in Europe lives half so well" as he had lived in Gordon-castle and other Scotch houses, and in the hospitable halls of Lady Blessington.* As for what Landor had written to him in praise of New England,—well, he thought that country really did deserve not ill of his respect, "but it is an ungracious "people, and best judged at a distance. They would "offend your notions of what is due from one *gentleman* "to another every hour if you lived among them, while "in the great outline (all that is seen in the distance) "they are a just and intelligent race, and good trustees "of one's birthright of national pride. The perfec-"tion of good fortune, I think, is to *be* an American "and *live* with Englishmen." Landor will perhaps be thought not without excuse for the way in which he always afterwards spoke of Mr. N. P. Willis.

Before quitting Italy he stayed some time at the Baths of Lucca, and he did not arrive in England until the autumn of 1835. He stayed three months at Llanbedr-hall with Mr. Ablett, passed the winter months at Clifton, and rejoined his friend at Llanbedr in the spring of 1836.

* "She is my lodestar and most valued friend, for whose ac-"quaintance I am so much indebted to you that you will find it "difficult in your lifetime to diminish my obligations. I thank you "from the bottom of my heart."

# BOOK SEVENTH.

1836–1857. ÆT. 61–82.

TWENTY-ONE YEARS AT BATH.

I. *New and old Friendships.* II. *The Pentameron of Boccaccio and Petrarca.* III. *Writing Plays.* IV. *Reviewing a Reviewer.* V. *Visits and Visitors.* VI. *Death of Southey.* VII. *Last Series of Conversations.* VIII. *A Friend not Literary.* IX. *Reviews, Collected Works, Poemata et Inscriptiones, and Hellenics.* X. *Summer Holidays and Guests at Home.* XI. *Deaths of old Friends.* XII. *Fruit gathered from an Old Tree.* XIII. *Silent Companions.* XIV. *Last Days in Bath, and final Departure from England.*

## I. New and old Friendships.

I have described in a former page the impression made upon me by Landor when I met him first in the summer of 1836. He and Wordsworth had come to town expressly to witness Talfourd's *Ion;* with Crabb Robinson they occupied the same box on the first night of that beautiful tragedy; and well satisfied they seemed with themselves and with each other, as, to many who watched them during the performance, they half divided the interest with the play. We all of us met afterwards at Talfourd's house; but of the talk that might have made such a night memorable I regret that I recollect only one thing, impressed upon my memory by what followed a little later, that when the absence of Southey was deplored in connection with the domestic griefs that sadly occupied him at the time, there was

an expression of feeling from both Wordsworth and Landor of unrestrained and unaffected earnestness. When a very few weeks had passed after this, it was not a little startling to receive a *Satire on Satirists*, very evidently by Landor, in which Wordsworth was handled sharply for alleged disrespect to Southey.

It is hardly worth mention here. It made Crabb Robinson very angry, and, to propitiate him, Landor goodnaturedly called back the copy of the satire already on its way to Southey; but he stuck to his point that Wordsworth had been unjust to Southey's poetry, and had indeed small appreciation generally for the highest kinds of merit. To which Robinson made an excellent reply; going wider and deeper than he meant to go, or perhaps knew that he was going. "What matters it that "he is insensible to the astonishing powers of Voltaire "or Goethe? He is, after all, Wordsworth. In all "cases I care little what a man is *not;* I look to what he "*is*. And Wordsworth has written a hundred poems the "least excellent of which I would not sacrifice to give "him that openness of heart you require. Productive "power acts by means of concentration. With few "exceptions those only love everything who, like me, "can themselves do nothing." Nor was the satire itself all satire; for not a few passages from it might be cited that rise equally above the injustice committed and the anger provoked by it. *Pericles and Aspasia* had at this time been published, and to Southey thanks are given for having encouraged its writer to efforts of which the fruit was its Agamemnon scenes.

> "Called up by genius in an after-age,
> That awful spectre shook the Athenian stage:
> From eve to morn, from morn to parting night,
> Father and daughter stood before my sight;

I felt the looks they gave, the words they said,
And reconducted each serener shade.
Ever shall those to me be well-spent days;
Sweet fell the tears upon them, sweet the praise."

For some of the praise I was responsible; and very cordial acknowledgment of it reached me in a letter written from Heidelberg (1st September 1836), whither he had gone in the vain hope of being joined there by his elder children; when at the same time he sent me a fresh scene of *Orestes at Delphos*, and told me that those that had been most admired were "written at our "friend Kenyon's before breakfast, but chiefly in the "bedtime morning, while the sheets of *Pericles* were "passing through the press." Not praise only fell, however, but here and there a less kindly word for which he had little tolerance. "I returned from Ger-"many a fortnight since," he wrote to me from Clifton on the 29th of October, "but found myself so fatigued "and spiritless that I remained only a night in London, "not even going to pay my respects at Gore-house. "The splendid things you have written of me have "aroused, it seems, the choler of *Blackwood*. I never "have read until this moment (nor now) a single num-"ber of that worthy, who, I understand, has the impu-"dence to declare that I have stolen, God knows what, "from him and others. . . . I am not informed how "long this Scotchman has been at work about me, but "my publisher has advised me that he loses 150*l*. by "my *Pericles*. So that it is probable the Edinburgh "Areopagites have condemned me to a fine in my ab-"sence; for I never can allow any man to be a loser "by me, and am trying to economise to the amount of "this indemnity to Saunders and Otley. . . I think it "probable that I shall fix myself at Clifton for a year."

The *Blackwood* review was really not a bad one, and, with a laugh for the absurdity of its parallel passages, might have satisfied any man; he described it himself as a mere "kick on the shin between two compliments;" yet what was here threatened was soon afterwards actually done, and the hundred pounds which Mr. James had obtained for the MS. of *Pericles* was paid back by Landor to its publishers! It may be held perhaps hereafter among the curiosities of literature that an author should have done this. I am not acquainted with any other instance.

In the same letter he sent me a copy of the original edition of a book which had belonged to Swift's celebrated uncle Godwin, progenitor of the so-named first husband of his friend the Countess de Molandè—Milton's *Defensio:* and here I may say, once for all, that a continual and inexhaustible source of sympathy between us was our common admiration of those chiefs of our English Commonwealth to whom early studies had led me; and that even the glittering forms of antique gods and heroes never took more radiant shape in Landor's imagination, than the homely iron helmets and buffalo cuirasses of our own Hampdens, Iretons, Blakes, and Cromwells.

At Clifton the winter was passed; but before I mention his meeting with the friend who joined him there, a couple of extracts from his letters addressed to that friend may be given.

To Southey: from Llanbedr-hall: 4th February 1836.

"You too have had great sufferings" [this followed the mention already quoted of his own family sorrow], "but not hopeless, and every source of pride that virtue can open to assuage them. Pray tell me whether there is any certainty of your being in London soon. I abhor the very name, but I will meet you

there if you will let me. But I am afraid you will hardly have patience with a man so obstinate and incorrigible in his politics. I detest the trickery and sheer dishonesty of many of the whigs as much as you do: but I am convinced that we must yield to the impulse that has been given to men's minds, and that we must remove (since we cannot cure) what works upon their envy and malice. I have not been quite unoccupied. You will soon have the *Letters of Pericles and Aspasia*, which I could have greatly increased in number; but I often have had occasion to say to myself,

'Non profecturis litora bobus aras.'

Now I should construe *bobus* not 'with the oxen,' but 'for the oxen.' Did you ever peradventure meet with Mr. Willis the American?" [He tells the story already told, up to the assurance he had received, just before quitting Fiesole, that the books and MS. had been "consigned to an American near the Leghorn gate."] "I called on the American: he denied that he had ever seen them, and was angry at such an intimation that he was deficient in punctuality. I took no more trouble about them. The corrections and additions cost me more trouble and time than the composition had done. But there is enough without any more. I am now on my way to my favourite Clifton, where my intention is to remain a month at least; for the fogs of London make my heart quite flabby, to say nothing of quinsy;

'O, tormento maggior d' ogni tormento!' "

To Southey: from Penrose-cottage, Clifton: 30th October 1836.

"I have been in Germany three months, hoping that some of my family would meet me there. Here I am again at Clifton, and here I think I shall finish my days; the climate suits my health so perfectly. Again I hear the rumour, and this time I hope it is not a false one, that you are coming amongst us. God grant that the expectation may arise from some improvement in the health of Mrs. Southey. I shall never regret that you do not come, if I hear that you could consistently with your sense of duty; so much greater would be my pleasure at this event" [he means the recovery of Mrs. Southey] "than even your society could give me. . . . . Nothing can exceed the civilities I met with in Germany among the learned. No

sooner had I reached England than I was informed of an attack made on me, and a worse threatened, by some doctor or professor in Edinburgh. But his labour is vain in regard to me. I have only to send back the 100*l.* I got for my *Pericles*, which I have already told the publisher I shall do. Did you ever receive those two volumes? The short letter of Pericles on the death of his sons will please you, and perhaps some few others. If the Edinburgh worthy wished to impose a fine on me for my delinquency, why could not he mention some respectable family who wanted the amount? He may influence the opinion of a certain number of people for a little while, but of none about whom I care a straw. I never remonstrate: and never will contend with any man for anything. I formed this resolution when I went to college, and have kept it. I have been reading for the third time Charles Elton's Elegy on the loss of his two sons. It is not an elegy (though the structure of the verse has nothing to do with the matter), but many parts strike me as much as anything I ever read of the elegiac. Tears were in my eyes the first time, the second time, and the third time, on reading

> 'That night the little chamber where they lay,
> Fast by my own, was vacant and was still.'

I do not like the Rhine so much as many parts of Italy. Como, Sorrento, and Amalfi, to say nothing of Ischia and Capri, far surpass all without the Alps, I mean on this side of them. Let me hear anything which gives you satisfaction or hope."

There was little of either, alas, left for Southey in this world; but such lights and shadows of the pleasant past as were still to be reflected from its old associations and memories, he now for the last time enjoyed in company with his friend. Their sympathies were close and affectionate as ever, widely as their opinions had diverged; and even of some later Conversations, in which idols of his own were overthrown, Southey had written shortly before to another friend: "What you "have heard me say of his temper is the only explana- "tion of his faults. Never did man represent himself "in his writings so much less generous, less just, less

" compassionate, less noble in all respects than he " really is. I certainly never knew any one of brighter " genius or of kinder heart." With this bright genius and kind heart he now, accompanied by his son, walked for the last time over the downs of Clifton, and revisited in Bristol the places of his boyhood. The good old Cottle, who had published his *Joan of Arc* exactly forty years before, and advanced him the money to buy his wedding-ring, entertained them there; they went to the house of Southey's grandmother at Bedminster, and to the church which with her and his mother he had attended half a hundred years before; they went to his aunt Tyler's in College-green; they included in their pilgrimage the house in which he was born, the schools he had been sent to, and what had been his father's shop. Nothing was omitted, and Southey seemed to have forgotten nothing; not even a short-cut or by-way of that strangely unattractive city; and as he darted down some alley, or threaded some narrow lane, he would tell his companions that he had not traversed it since his schoolboy days. "Ah," said Landor to him, as they stumbled over some workmen in turning away from College-green, "workmen some day may be busy " on this very spot putting up your statue; but it will " be twenty years hence." "Well," was his friend's rejoinder, "if ever I have one, I would wish it to be " here." The wish has not had fulfilment, though more than thirty years have passed since then. "This was " a pleasant visit," writes Mr. Cuthbert Southey, "and " my father's enjoyment was greatly enhanced by the " company of Mr. Savage Landor, who was then re- " siding at Clifton, and in whose society we spent " several delightful days. He was one of the few " men with whom my father used to enter freely into

" conversation, and on such occasions it was no mean
" privilege to be a listener."

Landor quitted Clifton in the early spring of 1837, was again for a time at Llanbedr, visited Lady Blessington in London and his sisters at Warwick, joined Kenyon at Torquay, and passed some of the later days of summer with his friend Brown at Plymouth. Yet idle as such a life might have been to another man, it was not so to him. Creatures of his fancy went with him everywhere; were present with him most in crowds; and were altogether much more real to him, when he cared to converse with them at all, than any actual living companions. Wherever pen and ink were accessible to him, and a sheet of paper, he was equipped for every enterprise. "When I think of writing on
" any subject, I abstain a long while from every kind
" of reading, lest the theme should haunt me, and some
" of the ideas take the liberty of playing with mine.
" I do not wish the children of my brain to imitate
" the gait or learn any tricks of others." All the time I have named was one of rich and ready productiveness; "conservative" letters, conversations, dramatic scenes, came forth abundantly; and a work was brought to completion which he had begun before quitting Italy, in which Boccaccio and Petrarca were the speakers, and which with the Shakespeare and the Pericles formed a trilogy so filled with the greatness and variety of his genius that it may be called, upon the whole, its most complete expression. My account of this work may be preceded by a few notes from letters written in the interval, which will tell us something of the friends seen or books read by him while he had it in hand.

At an old bookseller's in Bristol he picked up some of the writings of Blake, and was strangely fascinated by

them. He was anxious to have collected as many more as he could, and enlisted me in the service; but he as much wanted patience for it as I wanted time, and between us it came to nothing. He protested that Blake had been Wordsworth's prototype, and wished they could have divided his madness between them; for that some accession of it in the one case, and something of a diminution of it in the other, would very greatly have improved both. He had been reading Wordsworth's "last" volume when he first wrote to me from Clifton, and was confirmed in the opinion he had held when most admiring him, that his ship would sail the better for casting many loose things overboard. What a fine poem was the Power of Sound, and how magnificently the tenth stanza began! "But after eight most noble Pin-"daric verses on Pan and the Fawns and Satyrs, he lays "hold on a coffin and a convict, and ends in a flirta-"tion with a steeple. We must never say all we think, "and least so in poetry." What follows is dated a few months later (9th December 1837), when he was still angry with Wordsworth; who yet retained enough of his old admiration to have been able to afford to give a smile to this, if I could have shown it to him. "Yester-"day a Mr. Moreton, a young man of rare judgment, "read to me a manuscript by Mr. Tennyson, very dif-"ferent in style from his printed poems. The subject "is the death of Arthur. It is more Homeric than any "poem of our time, and rivals some of the noblest parts "of the Odyssea. There are two kinds of simplicity: "this exhibits one. If I have time between the present "hour and the postman, I will attempt the other, the "more popular.

> "I met a little boy on the canal,
> And he was singing blithely fal-de-ral.

Now Heaven has placed it high 'mid human joys
To talk with elf-lock girls and ragged boys.
'Have you a father?' 'Plenty,' he replied.
'A mother?' 'She was yesterday a bride.'
'A brother?' 'One too many.' 'Any sister?'
'She's dead; I never (till you named her) mist her.'
At these quick answers, as was meet, I smiled,
And tapped the shoulder of the clever child."

Thanking him for his *Pericles and Aspasia*, Crabb Robinson had mentioned his having "put into the lips "of nurse Demophile a sarcasm which dear Charles "Lamb uttered when a little child. Indeed at his "age it was no sarcasm, but mere childish naïvete. "His sister took him into a churchyard, where he "amused himself for a considerable time reading the "inscriptions, and at last came to her, and with great "gravity said, 'Sister Mary, where do the naughty "people lie?'" "Your anecdote of Lamb's child-"hood," replied Landor, "makes my heart overflow. "How much wiser are we with our own wisdom than "with other people's! It fits us. . . Somebody told me," he adds, "that your illustrious friend Goethe hated dogs. "God forgive him, if he did. I never can believe it "of him. They too are half-poets; they are dreamers. "Do any other animals dream? For my part, as you "know, I love them heartily. They are grateful, they "are brave, they are communicative, and they never "play at cards." At the close of his letter he wishes for a translation of Goethe's *Iphigeneia*, and in his next has found what he wanted in Taylor's *Specimens*. There it was, with "fifty other fine things," of which Nathan the Wise had impressed him most; though he thought the other a "great work," and only regretted that Goethe had not corrected in it the principal fault of the old tragedians by making the chorus at all times subservient

to the action. Two lines of Taylor's version he hoped the original did not contain: where he talks of Iris with "painted hand" dividing the "dusky-skirted" clouds. "This is not the language of tragedy, nor good or "tolerable poetry of any kind. Clouds are never "dusky-*skirted*, the skirt being always the lightest "part of them; and *skirt* itself is a mean and vile "word on the occasion, though common, and defended "in some sort by the practice of Shakespeare. But "we ought never to borrow his skirt or his blanket, "though he has both at our service." He hopes too that it is Taylor and not Goethe who has added a new god to the Greek theogony, "*Fulfilment*, daughter of "the almighty sire." That would never do, either for gods or allegorical personages; nor could allegorical personages ever come forward with effect in the drama.

"I shall be at Gore-house on Monday," he says in a letter of this date; "pray come in the evening. I told "Lady Blessington I should not let any of her court "stand at all in my way. When I am tired of them, "I leave them. But if you come, I can fly to you at "once in case of annoyance. Courtesy is not an un-"pleasant exercise for a little while. It is like riding "a spirited horse well enough to show we can keep "our seat and do it gracefully, but there is no occa-"sion to be at it all day long. It is quite enough to "let the beast know that he has a master who is up to "him and the worst of his curvets and prances." But not after the visit did he so speak of the house in which his happiest London life was passed, for of all others it was that in which he felt the least constraint, and knew that he should always find the warmest welcome. Its attraction to those who had familiar admission there was

even less the accomplishments and grace of its mistress, than her trueheartedness and constancy in friendship; and no one had reason to know this better than Landor. Again and again he dwells upon it in letters to his sister. From the splendour of the mansion, the taste and order of its interior, the extent and beauty of its pleasure-grounds, its company of men the most distinguished and of opinions the most various and opposed,—he comes always back to its central charm, the unaffectedness and warmth of heart that presided over all, and yielded to every one who entered it his greatest enjoyment. He had himself at last quite a tender friendship for two lilac-trees that flowered under the terrace where he had his favourite seat, overlooking what tradition still eagerly claimed as the birthplace and deathplace of the two greatest of English sovereigns, Elizabeth and Cromwell; and if he did not, as each year came round, appear when those lilacs were in bloom, he was playfully reminded that they waited and were longing for him. All are gone now; a public garden has swallowed up house and terrace, and Cromwell-roads and Cromwell-houses have covered once-memorable spots with mere shadows of a name; but there are some who never pass where they once were without thinking of her to whom their pleasantest associations belong, and who merited so well the grateful affection which Landor was always eager to express for her.

> "White and dim-purple breath'd my favourite pair
> Under thy terrace, hospitable heart,
> Whom twenty summers more and more endear'd;
> Part on the Arno, part where every clime
> Sent its most graceful sons to kiss thy hand,
> To make the humble proud, the proud submiss,
> Wiser the wisest, and the brave more brave.
> Never, ah never now, shall we alight
> Where the man-queen was born, or, higher up,

The nobler region of a nobler soul,
Where breath'd his last the more than kingly man.
*Thou* sleepest, not forgotten nor unmourn'd,
Beneath the chestnut shade by Saint Germain."

From other letters written to myself at this time I take what follow. The first arose out of some remarks made by me on his *Pericles;* and never, I think, was there better refutation of a common fallacy that great men who have succeeded to the great, and are mounted as it were on their shoulders, must necessarily be of taller stature and wider vision than their predecessors.

"Critics, in supposing that improvements were constantly made in poetry by the successors of the first great masters, add an apex to the accumulated foolery of ages. Thus not only was Virgil preferred to Homer (and especially in those very qualities in which he is most signally the inferior), but Euripides to Sophocles, and Sophocles to Æschylus. Whereas there is enough of materials in Æschylus to equip a troop of Sophocleses and a squadron of Euripideses. The tragedies of this latter, of which the choruses are admirable, are as ill-constructed as Virgil's epic. On the contrary, nothing is more skilful in the Attic scheme than the dramas of Æschylus, rude as the heroes and gods, and as well-proportioned and potent. So shall I think until it is disproved that there is any skill in so ordaining them that every action shall be the legitimate parent of its successor. The Spaniards were the first discoverers of a new world in tragedy, rich indeed, but spreading in all countries a sad distemper. Plot was the word. Labyrinths to the ignorant bear always the semblance of deep contrivance and rare ingenuity, of amplitude and extent. All the Greeks renounced such barbarism; Æschylus most decidedly. In him there is no trickery, no trifling, no delay, no exposition, no garrulity, no dogmatism, no declamation, no prosing; none of the invidious sneers, none of the captious sophistry, of the Socratic school; but the loud clear challenge, the firm unstealthy step, of an erect broad-breasted soldier. Depend on it that the reader to whom is granted an ardent mind with a clear judgment, will discover in Æschylus a far higher power of poetry than in those ancients who drug us with soporific apophthegms, or in those moderns who mystify us with impenetrable metaphysics. Our best sympathies rest

ever among the generous, among the brave, among those who are fallen from the summits of the world; and our hearts are the most healthily warmed when they are drawn before their sufferings and wrongs. I scarcely dare lift up my eyes when I remember that on this subject I differ, although but in a degree, from Aristoteles. He however had seen only a few headlands: the continent of Shakespeare, with its prodigious range of inextinguishable fires, its rivers of golden sands, its very desarts paved with jewels, its forests of unknown plants to which the known were dwarfs, this unpromised and unexpected land, in all its freshness and variety and magnitude, was to emerge."

In connexion with the same book and the specimens it contains of orators, I had asked him what he thought the finest thing in that kind, modern or ancient; and he answered without hesitation by naming these dozen words of Chatham: "The first shot that is fired in "America separates the two countries."

"What searching sagacity! what inevitable truth! The surest sign of a great prophecy is the coincidence of admiration and unbelief. For any thing like this of our last and almost only grand minister, we must press through the crowd of orators, we must pass Cicero, we must pass Demosthenes, we must raise up our eyes to Pericles, when he tells the childless of the Athenians that 'the year hath lost its spring.'"

### The Lesbia of Catullus.

"Nothing is absurder than the idea of the grammarians that the Lesbia of Catullus was the wife of Quinctus Metellus Celer, who was one of the Claudian family, and as wicked as any of it. Lesbia was not indeed, as most of Horace's girls were, a girl of straw: she was really of flesh and blood, but evidently of common life, and she descended but little when she ran down from her dead sparrow to display herself 'in quad-'riviis et angiportis.'"

### Anecdote of Canning.

"Canning had much festivity and frolic, and he retained to the last years of his life no little of the schoolboy in his manners and conversation, with about the same indifference whom

they might offend. So unstudied and ingenuous were his courtesies, that, when George III. saw him again for the first time after his duel with Castlereagh, and inquired with his usual curiosity where he was hit, he snatched the king's hand and placed it on the part, which happened to be among the least opportune for inspection or demonstration. George raised his white eyebrows, opened his glassy eyes, turned round to the lord-in-waiting, and said with perturbation, 'A very odd man this Mr. Canning! a very odd man indeed!'"

Landor was close on Canning's heels at Oxford, had been in communication with him more than once, and had not been very tolerant of many passages in his public life; but he never denied his possession of rare and exquisite powers, and it was upon my calling his attention to what seemed an unfair application of some remarks on the Castlereagh quarrel that these letters were written.

"Arrogant as he was in pretension while holding office, indifferent to veracity in assertion, and swayed by vanity or resentment from any principle to its opposite, he was delightful in private society, adapting his conversation to the temper and abilities of those with whom he happened to converse. There he was never in opposition, but always in power: there his humour was easy and graceful: there his arrows were placed with the points downward, attracting all, wounding none. But minds, like bodies, if they prematurely swell out, then suddenly cease to grow in height and compass, and become sickly and irritable; Mr. Canning's did; and his tongue betrayed his distemper. His petulance in parliament made it incredible that, in addition to his witticisms in poetry, he had formerly been the rival of the otherwise unrivalled Sydney Smith in the piquancy and aptness of his criticisms."

From letters of the same date, explaining other allusions in his published dialogues, I take two extracts more.

ANECDOTE OF THURLOW.

"Thurlow was a chancellor who little adorned the woolsack. . . He is recorded to have given no important decision

without having first consulted Serjeant Hill, unless he had in view some private object. His wisdom rested all on his massive eyebrows; and there was room for more. A modest young clergyman was earnestly recommended to his patronage for preferment by a gentleman who on his entering life had rendered him many services. He received him with his usual surliness and brutality, threw before him wide-open his *Book of Livings*, and told him to take up a pen and to put it on the one he wished to have. Entreaty that his lordship would himself name the benefice was vain. At last the pen timidly rested on a vicarage. 'By God, sir,' cried Thurlow (who, as he never was likely to be by God otherwise than in an oath, never missed the opportunity), 'you have taken a beggarly cure close to the best living 'in my gift!'"

Sir Samuel Romilly.

"No ministry ever thought of raising Romilly to the peerage, although never was a gentleman of his profession respected more highly or more universally. The reason could not be that already too many of it had entered the house of lords; since every wind of every day had blown bellying silk gowns to that quarter, and under the highest walls of Westminster was moored a long galley of lawyers, chained by the leg to their administrations, some designated by the names of fishing-towns and bathing-machines they had never entered, and others of hamlets and farms they had recently invaded."

He never changed or faltered in this love and admiration for Romilly; and one of his letters to me written after his 80th year expressed the delight with which he had again been reading the memoir of him by his sons. "Of all the public men in England at any time "he was the honestest. He may be compared with "Phocion."

## II. The Pentameron of Boccaccio and Petrarca.

When Armitage Brown thanked Landor for this little volume, saying that never had he devoured a book with fiercer appetite, he also reminded him that already

he had heard some portion of it under the hills at Fiesole. There it had been begun, and on every lustrous page of it will be found the genius of the country that so gave it birth. I have spoken of the memories of Boccaccio that were on all sides of Landor at his villa, from whose gate up to the gates of Florence there was hardly a street or farm that the great story-teller had not associated with some witty or affecting narrative. The place was peopled by his genius with creatures that neither seasons nor factions had been able to change. Happy and well-founded was the prediction of his friend, that long before the *Decameron* would cease to be recited under their arching vines, the worms would be the only fighters for Guelph or Ghibelline; and that even under so terrible a visitation as another plague, its pages would remain a solace to all who could find refuge and relief in letters.

Such a refuge and relief had they been to Landor in every plague by which he had been visited, and this book was payment for a portion of the debt. Boccaccio is its hero; and the idea of it was doubtless taken from his letter to Petrarca accompanying the copy of *Dante* transcribed by himself for his use, inviting him to look more closely into it, and if possible to admire it more. In his illness at Certaldo he is visited by his friend; during interviews that occupy five several days, the Divine Comedy is the subject of their talk; and very wonderful talk it is that can make any subject, however great, the centre of so wide a range of scholarship and learning and of such abounding wealth of illustration, can press into the service of argument such a delightful profusion of metaphor and imagery, can mingle humour and wit with so much tenderness and wisdom, and clothe in language of consummate beauty so much dignity and variety of thought. But amidst it all we never lose our

interest in the simple and kindly old burgess of Certaldo and his belongings; his little maid Assunta and her lover; even the rascally old frate confessor, who suggests his last witty story: and not more delightful is the grave Petrarca when his eloquence is at its best, than in the quaint little scene where Assuntina has to girth-up his palfrey for him.

The title of the book should be given in full. *The Pentameron; or Interviews of Messer Giovanni Boccaccio and Messer Francesco Petrarca, when said Messer Giovanni lay infirm at Viletta hard by Certaldo: after which they saw not each other on our side of Paradise: shewing how they discoursed upon that famous Theologian Messer Dante Alighieri, and sundry other matters. Edited by* Pievano D. Grigi. And here I may remark that Mr. Kirkup, the greatest authority in everything relating to Dante, thinks it as much an error of his friend to have called him Messer as if some Italian critic had called himself Sir Landor. "In all the legal documents I have of the "sale of Peter Dante's estate he is called Dominus Pe- "trus filius Dantii Allighierii: Dominus being the Latin "for Lord or Messire, the title applied to a judge in "the republic, while poor Dante is named as a common "citizen in the same legal deeds in which his son is "always styled Messire, or Dominus." All which might be perfectly true, said Landor pleasantly; but perhaps the prete Grigi, who thought Dante memorable only for his theology, did not know it.

As on the title-page of the Shakespeare we find only Mr. Ephraim Barnett's name, so on this stands only Domenico Grigi's. In what way he possessed himself of the manuscript is not clearly stated, but, after translation by the best hand he could afford to engage, he had brought it over to London; because he greatly wanted

a bell, he says, for his church at San Vivaldo, and hearing that the true religion was rapidly gaining ground in England, to the unspeakable comfort and refreshment of the faithful, he bethought himself that he might peradventure obtain such effectual aid from the piety and liberality of converts as well-nigh to accomplish the purchase of one. He has also a word or two on what was still remaining at Certaldo of Ser Giovanni's house, and of his tomb and effigy in the church; remarking that nobody had opened the grave to throw light upon his relics, nobody had painted the marble, nobody had broken off a foot or a finger to do him honour, and not even an English name was engraven on the face, although the English held confessedly the highest rank in that department of literature. Nor out of keeping with the playful humour that thus runs through the whole of his introduction is the grave little note which is struck at its close, when, after relating the death of Petrarca not very long after their interview, and that Boccaccio followed him before he had worn the glossiness off the cloak which the other in his will had bequeathed to him, the good priest adds: "We struggle with death while "we have friends around to cheer us: the moment "we miss them, we lose all heart for the contest. Par- "don my reflection. I ought to have remembered I am "not in my stone pulpit at home."

Landor had no ground for complaining of the reception of this book, by the few whose good opinion he valued: and for the rest he had but to remember, what is said in the course of it, that what makes the greatest vernal shoot is apt to make the least autumnal; that what was true of the fame of Marcellus, "crescit occulto "velut arbor ævo," is true of every other fame; and that since we can hardly hope for this, and enjoy immediate

celebrity besides, the few may be held supremely fortunate to whom a choice between them has been given. Upon the same subject, in that highest aspect of it which takes the form of admonition to the worshippers of immediate ascendencies, this very volume contained a saying remarkable for its beauty. It occurred in a note to the five dramatic scenes which originally closed the *Pentameron* with a *Pentalogia;* one of these being the quarrel of Bacon and Essex, where Bacon's proud belief in his own superiority to all living men, drawn from him by the contempt of Essex, is thus checked by Landor. "Bacon little knew or suspected that there was then "existing (the only one that ever did exist) his supe-"rior in intellectual power. Position gives magnitude. "While the world was rolling above Shakespeare, he "was seen imperfectly: when he rose above the world, "it was discovered that he was greater than the world. "The most honest of his contemporaries would scarcely "have admitted this, even had they known it. But "vast objects of remote altitude must be looked at a "long while before they are ascertained. Ages are "the telescope-tubes that must be lengthened out for "Shakespeare; and generations of men serve but as "single witnesses to his claims."

"I was at Talfourd's yesterday," wrote Kenyon soon after the volume appeared, "and was condemned to listen "on all sides to the praises of your *Pentameron*. My "friend Miss Barrett, too, says of it that if it were not "for the necessity of getting through a book, some of "the pages are too delicious to turn over." Leigh Hunt reckoned it to be, on the whole, Landor's masterpiece; and Julius Hare said that literature had nowhere so delightful a picture of the friendship of two supposed rivals, Goethe's actual intercourse with Schiller being the only

thing to compare with it in beauty. To Crabb Robinson also, who found it waiting for him on his return from Italy with Wordsworth in the autumn of 1837, it seemed as if no other of Landor's books had given him so great a pleasure; and the generality of prose writing, by the side of it, seemed to him but as the murky fog of Little Knight-street during Michaelmas term compared to the pure atmosphere of Certaldo on such summer nights as he had spent between Fiesole and Florence "with Parigi for "my protector." Parigi was Landor's favourite Italian dog, and the only inmate of the villa that had not welcomed the traveller at his recent visit. "Parigi was not "so kind as he used to be; yet when I called to him he "came to me, and only turned back slowly as if he felt, "'This is not the one I expected.' I really had that "fancy at the time." Another remark from this letter* will properly introduce the passage of which it speaks. "There is a piece of humour where you compare Lu-"cretius and Dante so precisely in the style of dear "Charles Lamb, that when I read it to any one, which "I have done six times already, I cannot help stutter-

* There is a further allusion in it to some lines found in Boccaccio's desk that are in fact a very exact picture of Landor's farm at Fiesole and the imagined pursuits of his children, which Mr. Layard will forgive me for quoting in unexpected illustration of what very lately he told me himself of his still vivid recollection of those scenes. "By the bye there was with me yesterday a remarkable young man "with whom I travelled a few years ago, and who was a school-"fellow of your son's. To him the *locale* of those lines is very fa-"miliar. He says you perhaps will not recollect him, though he "remembers you and yours so well. His name, Layard. He recog-"nised at once the pool, as I did the myrtles." I may add the mention of another of Landor's kindest friends, Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, with whom Robinson and Wordsworth passed a month at Rome. "She fell in love with the poet, calling him however a dear "*old man;* and has promised to spend a month with him at Rydal-"mount." She died, alas, in less than two years: not visiting England again.

" ing as he used to do, and half-shutting my eye when " I come to the words, *and not damned for it.*" The comparison, a masterly one, is made by Petrarca, but the words referred to are in Boccaccio's mouth.

"I have always heard that Ser Dante was a very good man and sound Catholic: but Christ forgive me if my heart is oftener on the side of Lucretius! Observe, I say my heart; nothing more. I devoutly hold to the sacraments and the mysteries: yet somehow I would rather see men tranquillised than frightened out of their senses, and rather fast asleep than burning. Sometimes I have been ready to believe, as far as our holy faith will allow me, that it were better our Lord were nowhere, than torturing in his inscrutable wisdom, to all eternity, so many myriads of us poor devils, the creatures of his hands. Do not cross thyself so thickly, Francesco; for I would be a good Catholic, alive or dead. But, upon my conscience, it goes hard with me to think it of him, when I hear that woodlark yonder, gushing with joyousness, or when I see the beautiful clouds, resting so softly one upon another, dissolving . . . and not damned for it."

Yet is it no merely one-sided view thus taken of the great Florentine, for never by any single hand has he had censure and praise dealt out to him in such equally exalted measure; if indeed the doubt may not arise whether censure itself be not only another form of praise, when it has the character of greatness that often accompanies it here. "Alighieri is grand by his lights, not by his " shadows; by his human affections, not by his infer- " nal. As the minutest sands are the labours of some " profound sea or the spoils of some vast mountain, in " like manner his horrid wastes and wearying minute- " nesses are the chafings of a turbulent spirit, grasping " the loftiest things and penetrating the deepest, and " moving and moaning on the earth in loneliness and " sadness." And again how finely is it said, that "he " is forced to stretch himself, out of sheer listlessness,

" in so idle a place as Purgatory: he loses half his " strength in Paradise: Hell alone makes him alert " and lively: there he moves about and threatens as " tremendously as the serpent that opposed the legions " on their march in Africa."

The more delicate graces of this astonishing genius are at the same time not overlooked:

"All the verses that ever were written on the nightingale are scarcely worth the beautiful triad of this divine poet on the lark:

'La lodoletta, che in aere si spazia,
Prima cantando, e poi tace contenta
Dell' ultima dolcezza che la sazia.'

In the first of them do not you see the twinkling of her wings against the sky? As often as I repeat them my ear is satisfied, my heart (like her's) contented."

— Nor his claim to be remembered as a master of pathos. It is here Petrarca who speaks, after celebrating his friend's power over the affections:

"My nature leads me also to the pathetic; in which, however, an imbecile writer may obtain celebrity. Even the hard-hearted are fond of such reading, when they are fond of any; and nothing is easier in the world than to find and accumulate its sufferings. Yet this very profusion and luxuriance of misery is the reason why few have excelled in describing it. The eye wanders over the mass without noticing the peculiarities. To mark them distinctly is the work of genius; a work so rarely performed, that, if time and space may be compared, specimens of it stand at wider distances than the trophies of Sesostris. Here we return again to the *Inferno* of Dante, who overcame the difficulty. In this vast desert are its greater and less oasis, Ugolino and Francesca di Rimini."

Very opportunely observed too is the distinction, most necessary to be remembered, between the prosaic treatment of an appalling subject and such treatment as Dante's. What is horror in prose becomes terror in

poetry, and in the most dreadful circumstances the soul is kept from sinking by the buoyancy of imagination.

"The sunshine of poetry makes the colour of blood less horrible, and draws up a shadowy and a softening haziness where the scene would otherwise be too distinct. Poems, like rivers, convey to their destination what must without their appliances be left unhandled: these to ports and arsenals, this to the human heart."

But, above all, Dante receives in this book the supreme distinction which belongs to him preëminently, which removes him far beyond the reach of either the praise or censure that may now be applied to him, and sets his name "on a hill apart" with the three, or at most four, out of all known literatures, which are imperishable on earth.

"I cannot but think again and again how fruitlessly the bravest have striven to perpetuate the ascendency or to establish the basis of empire, when Alighieri hath fixed a language for thousands of years and for myriads of men: a language far richer and more beautiful than our glorious Italy ever knew before in any of her regions, since the Attic and the Dorian contended for the prize of eloquence on her southern shores. Eternal honour, eternal veneration to him who raised up our country from the barbarism that surrounded her! Remember how short a time before him his master Brunetto Latini wrote in French; prose indeed; but whatever has enough in it for poetry has enough for prose out of its shreds and selvages."

Nor is Dante the only attraction of the book, which would indeed be poorly represented without something also of the wealth of thought and fancy that with almost boundless variety of illustration enriches its principal theme, and which one or two selections may help to show, though they show it badly.

### Middling Men and Great Men.

"Middling men, favoured in their lifetime by circumstances, often appear of higher stature than belongs to them; great men

always of lower. Time, the sovran, invests with befitting raiment and distinguishes with proper ensigns the familiars he has received into his eternal habitations: in these alone are they deposited: you must wait for them."

### Death's Alleviations.

"*Petrarca.* O Giovanni, the heart that has once been bathed in love's pure fountain retains the pulse of youth for ever. Death can only take away the sorrowful from our affections; the flower expands; the colourless film that enveloped it falls off and perishes.

"*Boccaccio.* We may well believe it: and believing it, let us cease to be disquieted for their absence who have but retired into another chamber. We are like those who have overslept the hour: when we rejoin our friends, there is only the more joyance and congratulation. Would we break a precious vase because it is as capable of containing the bitter as the sweet? No: the very things which touch us the most sensibly are those which we should be the most reluctant to forget. The noble mansion is most distinguished by the beautiful images it retains of beings past away; and so is the noble mind. The damps of autumn sink into the leaves and prepare them for the necessity of their fall: and thus insensibly are we, as years close round us, detached from our tenacity of life by the gentle pressure of recorded sorrows."

### Superficial and central Warmth.

"There are few in any other country of such easy, grateful, unaffected manners as our Italians. We are warmer at the extremities than at the heart: sunless nations have central fires."

### Poetry's highest Reach.

"A good satire or good comedy, if it does not always smile, rarely and briefly intermits it, and never rages. A good epic shows us more and more distinctly, at every book of it we open, the features and properties of heroic character, and terminates with accomplishing some momentous action. A good tragedy shows us that greater men than ourselves have suffered more severely and more unjustly; that the highest human power hath suddenly fallen helpless and extinct; or, what is better to contemplate and usefuller to know, that uncontrolled by law, unaccompanied by virtue, unfollowed by contentment, its pos-

session is undesirable and unsafe. Sometimes we go away in triumph with Affliction proved and purified, and leave her under the smiles of heaven. In all these consummations the object is excellent; and here is the highest point to which poetry can attain. Tragedy has no bye-paths, no resting-places; there is everywhere action and passion."

### Greatness in Poetry.

"Amplitude of dimensions is requisite to constitute the greatness of a poet, beside his symmetry of form and his richness of decoration. . . . We may write little things well, and accumulate one upon another; but never will any be justly called a great poet unless he has treated a great subject worthily. He may be the poet of the lover and the idler, he may be the poet of green fields or gay society; but whoever is this can be no more. A throne is not built of birds'-nests, nor do a thousand reeds make a trumpet."

### Privileged Plagiarists.

"A great poet may really borrow; he may even condescend to an obligation at the hand of an equal or inferior: but he forfeits his title if he borrows more than the amount of his own possessions. The nightingale himself takes somewhat of his song from birds less glorified; and the lark, having beaten with her wing the very gates of heaven, cools her breast among the grass. The lowlier of intellect may lay out a table in their field, at which table the highest one shall sometimes be disposed to partake: want does not compel him. Imitation, as we call it, is often weakness, but it likewise is often sympathy."

### Critics.

"There are critics who, lying under no fear of a future state in literature, and all whose hope is for the present day, commit injustice without compunction."

### Praising John to spite Thomas.

"*Petrarca.* Why cannot we be delighted with an author, and even feel a predilection for him, without a dislike to others? An admiration of Catullus or Virgil, of Tibullus or Ovid, is never to be heightened by a discharge of bile on Horace.

"*Boccaccio.* The eyes of critics, whether in commending or carping, are both on one side, like a turbot's."

ROME.

"*Boccaccio.* When I was in Rome nothing there reminded me of her former state, until I saw a goose in the grass under the Capitoline hill. This perhaps was the only one of her inhabitants that had not degenerated. Even the dogs looked sleepy, mangy, suspicious, perfidious, and thievish. The goose meanwhile was making his choice of herbage about triumphal arches and monumental columns, and picking up worms; the surest descendants, the truest representatives, and enjoying the inalienable succession, of the Cæsars. This is all that goose or man can do at Rome. She, I think, will be the last city to rise from the dead.

"*Petrarca.* There is a trumpet, and on earth, that shall awaken even her."

THE PILGRIM'S SHELL.

"Under a tuft of eglantine, at noon
I saw a pilgrim loosen his broad shell
To catch the water off a stony tongue;
Medusa's it might be or Pan's erewhile;
For the huge head was shapeless, eaten out
By time and tempest here, and here embost
With clasping tangles of dark maidenhair.
'How happy is thy thirst! how soon assuaged!
How sweet that coldest water this hot day!'
Whispered my thoughts; not having yet observ'd
His shell so shallow and so chipt around.
Tall though he was, he held it higher to meet
The sparkler at its outset: with fresh leap,
Vigorous as one just free upon the world,
Impetuous too as one first checkt, with stamp
Heavy as ten such sparklers might be deemed,
Rusht it amain, from cavity and rim
And rim's divergent channels, and dropt thick
(Issuing at wrist and elbow) on the grass.
The pilgrim shook his head, and fixing up
His scallop, 'There is something yet,' said he,
'Too scanty in this world for my desires!'"

That is one of the many perfect pieces scattered through the book, to which were added, as I have said, five scenes in blank verse, of which the speakers were Essex and Bacon during their quarrel; Walter Tyrrel

and William Rufus immediately before the king's death; the Parents of Luther shortly before his birth; and Electra and Orestes in the pieces sent to me from Heidelberg. Every one of these scenes has that vividness and force of reality which gave to all the forms of Landor's writing its mastery of dramatic expression; and there is one in particular, the Parents of Luther, quite unsurpassed for character and delicacy, from the first blushing avowal of the young mother to her dream about a coming boy that follows, the naming him Martin because that saint clothed the poor, and the guessing what the dream might portend of the lad's possible rise in life, from chorister to sacristan, sacristan to priest, and priest to abbot, till the father's irrepressible faith and boisterous confidence bursts out, "Ring the bells! Mar-" tin is pope, by Jove!" The scenes were dedicated to Southey in a few words, saying that only he and two others, Mr. James and myself, would care for them.

Nor did many more care for the book containing them, which, fascinating as it proved to the few, for the many fell still-born; and at the close of the year of its publication he wrote to me of the fine he had to pay for it. "I have just this moment paid a fine of a hundred and " forty pounds to Saunders and Otley for having a hand " in printing, and probably of the eighty I still owe " them I shall have to pay sixty next year." His letter was from Bath. "It was my intention," he had written to Southey from Torquay a month or two before (18th September 1837), "to return at the end of the month " to Clifton; but a few days since I had a letter from " my friend Elton telling me that he is about to leave " that place for Southampton, and his daughter wrote " to me a few lines in the same letter very much re-" gretting the scenes of her childhood. I have a great

" love for Clifton, above all other places in England;
" yet I cannot endure the sight of flowers or fields
" where I had ever spent pleasurable hours. So, instead
" of Clifton, I think I shall go to Bath in the middle of
" next month:" to the very place, that is, where he had spent all the most pleasurable hours of his early life. If the same wisdom had but guided him in all his contradictions! He really liked Bath; the choice was the happiest he could have made; and what led him to it was not the dislike but the love of pleasurable associations, hardly then to be obtruded on Southey. Some very old friends made it still their home, and it had become recently the home of others of later date. Colonel William Napier lived there, with whose brother Henry he had been intimate in Florence; and among its more recent residents were Mrs. Paynter and her children, members of that Aylmer family formerly so dear to him, who had themselves been the visitors last received at his villa before he quitted Italy, and among whom he was to find another Rose,* happier and not less fair than the first. Here then he pitched his tent; and the city which he would always say reminded him most of Florence, became his last English home. I passed with him there his sixty-third birthday, and with hardly an intermission for the next twenty years we dined together on that memorable 30th of January. It was our Calves'-head-club day; though Landor had commonly in hand too fierce a quarrel with some living sovereign, to trouble himself much with one who had paid with life the penalty of his misdoing.

The letter to which I have referred told me also of the recovery of his corrected copy of the published Conversations and of the manuscript of the new ones which

* See vol. i. p. 497.

he had placed in Mr. Willis's hands, which had crossed and recrossed the Atlantic, and at last, not even addressed to Landor, had found their way to Lady Blessington. He had not been sorry to recover them, he said; for though he should not have minded the loss of a volume that had never been published, he did not wish his corrections of himself to be ineffectual. The corrections in this particular copy, however, he found to have been written so badly, and so much interlined, that they would only have wearied out my patience; and he had therefore seriously set about a fresh copy in which many additional insertions had been made that it had required a good deal of attention, contrivance, and delicacy to engraft in the trunk and branches; but the wearisome work, a labour of now many months, would shortly be completed, and thenceforward he proposed to place them, with whatever else he had written, or might write, at my disposal. "I am resolved to hold "no intercourse with publishers, to claim no notice from "the public, and never even to announce what I have "done, am doing, or may do." I already knew his temper well enough to receive this kind of statement at its worth; but at least it was clear that for the sort of intercourse with publishers of which I lately gave an illustration, or indeed for business of any kind requiring prudence and patience, he was dangerously unfit.

His reply to my half-jesting remonstrance was very characteristic. He admitted there was a future day, though probably a distant one, when his books would be rightly estimated, and that it was certainly in their favour not to have been too much extolled. "*Mar-*
"*mion* was at first too much applauded; it is now
"too much underrated. Such trash of Byron's as the
"*Giaour* kept women from sleep and almost from scan-

" dal, and who reads it now? whereas such lines of " his (I forget the title) as 'A change came o'er the " spirit of my dream,' few people cared for, yet they " live, and will live always. I have no reason to com- " plain, and never did. I found my company in a " hothouse warmed with steam, and conducted them " to my dining-room through a cold corridor with no- " thing but a few old statues in it from one end to the " other, and they could not read the Greek names " on the plinth, which made them hate the features " above it. This only amused me; for the guests in " good truth had a better right to be displeased with " the entertainer than he with them. God grant I " may never be popular in any way, if I must pay the " price of self-esteem for it. I do not know whether " my writings are ever to emerge above those of my " contemporaries, but if they do I am sure it will be " after my lifetime; and some seem to think they will. " Read the enclosed." It was a letter from the author of the *Curiosities of Literature*. It touched a chord of the very earliest years of his life, even the old days of his friendship with Mocatta; and was indeed an expression of opinion he might fairly be proud to receive.

It was dated from Bradenham-house, Wycombe, on the 29th September 1838, and was written after reading the *Pentameron*. Various circumstances, it said, had prevented the writer doing this before. " I have now just " closed it, to be opened however hereafter. It has " happened to me, from early years in my life, to have " been acquainted both with your name and your writ- " ings.* I have been your constant reader. I have " never turned over a page of your writing but with a " pause of reflection. In the present imaginary con-

* See ante, i. 139.

" versations you have, if possible, excelled yourself; so " perfectly have you personated the spirits of your two " great actors, such novelty have you given to a search- " ing and exquisite criticism on the three finest geniuses " of modern literature. You have shown the caustic " smile of Petrarch on Dante; and surely Boccaccio " himself would have laughed heartily, as at least I did, " at the lovely girl so kindly watchful over our corpu- " lent sentimentalist girthing his mule. All that you " have written has been masterly, and struck out by " the force of an original mind. You have not con- " descended to write down to the mediocrity of the " populace of readers. You will be read hereafter. I " know not whether you have written a century too late " or too early: too late, if the taste for literature has " wholly left us; too early, if the public mind has not " yet responded to your sympathies. Believe me with " great regard faithfully yours, I. D'Israeli."

## III. Writing Plays.

Thirteen days after the date of Mr. D'Israeli's letter, on the 12th October 1838, I received what follows:

"He who sprains an ankle breaks a resolution. I sprained my ankle a week ago by treading on a lump of mortar which a beast of a mason let drop out of his hod in Milsom-street. It twisted under my leg, and down I came. Nevertheless I resolved to walk home, after I was picked up, two gentlemen having run across the street and helped me: for as to getting up by my own efforts, that was out of the question. With great difficulty I reached my lodgings. And now for the breach of resolution I have committed. I am a great admirer of Mrs. Jameson's writings. So I sent on Saturday night for her Female Sovereigns. On Sunday after tea I began a drama on Giovanna di Napoli (God defend us from the horrid sound, Joan of Naples!); and before I rose from my bed on Monday

morning, I had written above a hundred and seventy verses as good as any I ever wrote in my life excepting my Death of Clytemnestra. Of course I slept little. In fact, I scarcely sleep at all by night while the people of my brain are talking. While others are drinking I doze and dream, and sometimes snore peradventure; at least those have told me so who know best. Now not a word to any one about this drama, which I promise to send you before a month is over. Since the first day I have done nothing in the composition of it, so many people have been calling on me. However, nobody shall come in before two nor after three for the future. But I must return the calls as soon as I can get out, and these are grievous losses of time. It is odd enough that I had written a good many scraps of two Imaginary Conversations in which Giovanna is a speaker; but I cannot remember a syllable of them, nor would they do. She and Vittoria Colonna are my favourites among the women of Italy, as Boccaccio and Petrarca among the men. But to have clear perceptions of women, to elicit their thoughts and hear their voices to advantage, I must be in the open air, in the sun, alas! in Italy, were it possible. My sprained ankle will not let me take my long and rapid strides. I am an artificial man. I want all these helps for poetry. Quiet and silent nights are the next things needful. How happy is Southey, who can do all things better than any of us, and can do them all in the midst of noise and interruption! He is gone into Brittany. May he return in health and spirits. . . . God bless you. Do not think it necessary to condole with me on my sprain."

Five days later came the following. I had meanwhile, after expressing my delight that out of such a nettle as a sprain he was plucking the flower of a tragedy, endeavoured to point out to him that a drama, if it meant anything, should mean what could be acted; and that if he had not something to say which the theatre would enable him to say best, it was unwise to adopt a form that surrendered obvious advantages without corresponding return.

"My drama will never do for the stage. Besides, why should I make so many bad men worse? Is there any poet, beside Southey and perhaps our Paracelsus [Mr. Browning],

who would not suffer from blue devils at any success of mine? The best of our living dramatic writers, Sheridan Knowles, gets grudgingly praised. I would not be mobbed, present or absent. Even Macready's genius and judgment can hardly bring together half a dinner-party to see living Shakespeare. Yet Shakespeare not only keeps poetry alive, but Christianity. When people see one inspired man, inspired to delight and elevate them, they may believe that there may be another inspired and sent to save them from the devil. My scenes fall in the natural order. What is *plot* but *trick?* However, my team is strong enough to carry my materials from one part of the field to the other, if need be. You must tell me about it. You shall not have any of it before you have the whole; and it shall not be a fortnight first."

The promise was kept; all the scenes composing the tragedy known afterwards as *Andrea of Hungary* were in my hands on the 2d of November; and the subjoined characteristic letter accompanied them:

"Conceived, planned, and executed in thirteen days; transcribed (the worst of the business) in six. Any man, I am now convinced, may write a dozen such within the year. The worst of it is, in anything dramatic, such is the rapidity of passion the words escape before they can be taken down. If you lose one, you lose the tone of the person, and never can recover it. Desperation! And the action is gone too. You have a dead man before you,—but galvanised.

"How a sprained ankle helps a poet in getting over the ground! It should not have hindered me, had the weather been finer and the walks less slippery, from creeping along through my favourite lanes, and inhaling the incense round the dying hawthorn-leaves, the viaticum of their departure. They quit the world without sprained ankles, happy souls!

"Make the best of my phantasmagoria; shift the glasses as you will, and toss as many of the figures as you will aside. I will have no farther concern or thought about the matter. I have enjoyed my sunshine once more in pleasant Italy, and am ready for my siesta. If your opinion is a favourable one, let me hear it—*se no, no*, as the Arragonese say to their king.

"By the by, I am half a Carlist. I would rather the Biscayans were independent and free than all the rest of the

Spaniards; they are the very best people upon earth, not excepting the Tyrolese.

"Write me one line as soon as you receive the parcel. My hodge-podge was completed on Friday night just before twelve.

"I have not had leisure to count the verses. There should not be many more than 1800; at least there are not, if I remember, in tragedies or mixt dramas. However, I have weeded out and weeded out, and have rejected as much as would furnish any friend for another piece—as good as this.

"Any of my worthy critics may tell me that I do not know the difference between an act and a scene. Very true; I have said something about this in my Milton and Marvel.* So, I have merely markt out the scenes, as they are called, and leave the acts to the curious. I had myself a fanciful division of them into five; but their length was not symmetrical by any means. Now adieu, my dear friend; I have given you but a tough and dry radish as a whetting for your entertainment.

"A capital prologue has this instant come into my head, if hereafter the piece should be licked into shape:

> No prologue will our author's pride allow;
> If you can do without it, show it now.

"Observe, I have made Andrea rather tolerable: at last rather interesting: quite uneducated: ductile: but gentle-hearted, compliant, compassionate, and, above all, a graceful rider. These qualities, taken together, are enough to make a sensible woman of great generosity *love him even*. Such a woman would be more likely than another. I never knew a very sensible woman, once excepted, love a very sensible man. There never was one who could resist a graceful and bold rider, if there was only one single thing about him which would authorise her to say, 'It was not merely for his horsemanship.'

"In the characters generally I have avoided strong contrasts. These are the certain signs of a weak artist. There are however shades of complexion, diversities of manner, and degrees of height. It would be ridiculous to tell you this after you have read the thing—less amiss, before."

Hardly had I written what I thought of the scenes, or suggested what seemed to me required for their orderly arrangement, when tidings of another completed

* And see ante, i. 389-90.

portion reached me; second of a trilogy on the theme he had chosen. I had written on the 3d of November, and five days later had this startling announcement:

"Thursday, Nov. 9. Your praises, which came this day se'nnight, created the last drama I shall ever write. It contains above 1100 verses!

"I only write now to tell you that I completed (just before dinner) the second of my trilogy. I will not ever write the third, tho' I have a scrap or two for it. No, the easy part, the part that anybody else would have taken, shall be left for somebody to try his hand against me. Giovanna is absolved by Rienzi, and returns to Naples. Let another kill her; let another make her cry out against the ingratitude of Durazzo. Unluckily I have not the life of Rienzi. I had it in Italian by a contemporary. What was his wife's name? Was he married? Had he a mistress? Pray let me know; perhaps I may want it, but probably not. I am a horrible confounder of historical facts. I have usually one history that I have read, another that I have invented."

Observing so resolute an asseveration that he would never write the third in the trilogy, I half expected to receive it before even the completion of the second; but I had to wait a little. On the 13th of November he wrote again:

"Gratifying as your praises are, I like your objections still better, and would rather have the utmost of your severity. My division of the acts (an arbitrary one) would probably be the same as yours. The first would contain 366 verses, the second 255, the third 448. My fourth was inordinately long; my last little more than one scene. I want you to make some insertions in the first, where the queen speaks of her husband to her sister Maria, and afterwards to her foster-mother Filippa. After 'I will earn,' paste in

> *Maria.* How can we love—
> *Giovanna* (*interrupting*). Mainly by hearing none
> Decry the object; then, by cherishing
> The good we see in it, and overlooking
> What is less pleasant in the paths of life.

All have some virtue, if we leave it them
In peace and quiet; all may lose some part
By sifting too minutely bad and good.

Where Andrea follows Fra Rupert, after 'he went in wrath,' I would add

He may do mischief, if he thinks it right;
As those religious people often do.

And where Filippa says that he deserves their pity, let this follow:

*Giovanna.* O, more than pity. If our clime, our nation,
Bland, constant, kind, congenial with each other,
Were granted him, how much more was withheld!
Sterile the soil is not, but sadly waste.
What buoyant spirits and what pliant temper!
How patient of reproof! how he wipes off
All injuries before they harden on him,
And wonders at affronts and doubts they can be!
Then his wild quickness! O, the churl that bent it
Into the earth, colourless, shapeless, thriftless,
Fruitless, for ever! Had he been my brother,
I should have wept all my life over him:
But being my husband, one hypocrisy
I must put on, one only ever will I.
Others must think, by my observance of him,
I hold him prudent, penetrating, firm,
No less than virtuous: I must place myself
In my own house (now indeed his) below him.
*Filippa.* I almost think you love him.
*Giovanna.* He has few,
Even small faults, which small minds spy the soonest;
He has, what those will never see nor heed,
Wit of bright feather, but of broken wing;
No stain of malice, none of spleen, about it.
For this, and more things nearer . . . for the worst
Of orphancy, the cruelest of frauds,
Stealth of his education while he played,
Nor fancied he could want it; for our ties
Of kindred; for our childhood spent together;
For those dear faces that once smiled upon us
At the same hour, in the same balcony;
Even for the plants we rear'd in partnership,
Or spoil'd in quarrel, I do love Andrea.
But, from his counsellors!

The Second Part is more regular ; but in this the first act is longer than any of the rest : it contains 448 verses. Yet the whole piece is little more than 1100, I think ; but I have not counted farther than I have transcribed, which is only one page beyond the first act. If you should really be contented with the First when your changes are made, you might ask Macready whether he thinks it adapted to the stage, and whether *he* can suggest any improvement. We English have done less for the stage in the last two centuries and a quarter than any other nation in Europe ; less than an acted tragedy in a century ! The best, I think, since *Venice Preserved*, are *Virginius* and the *Hunchback*. We want the coming-out of character : we want more than side-faces. In a grand historical picture all the faces must not be painted in profile, nor all the figures come with the best leg foremost."

His next letter, four days later, brought me more of the scenes of the second play, and some inserted passages of extraordinary beauty. I at first doubted whether it was right thus to exhibit a work of art in the process of construction, with its scaffolding around it ; but as with *Count Julian*, so here, both the character and the genius of Landor receive illustration from the intimate view thus afforded, not merely of his rapid and impulsive composition, but of the rare power he possessed of putting into his numberless additions, insertions, and corrections, into his second and third and fourth and twentieth thoughts, all the heat and glow of his first noble fancy. The inspiration has never dropped. There is nothing finer in the tragedies than the after-insertions sent in these letters.

"You shall not be disappointed in my Rienzi as far as vigour goes. I represent him as a very imperfect character ; he was so. His wife, or mistress, whichever was the best of the two, says great things to him, when, after Giovanna's appeal to him against the charge of having murdered her husband, he wavers on equity for the sake of maintaining his power, saying that since his rise many friends have fallen from him :

*Wife.* Throw not off the rest.
What! is it, then, enough to stand before
The little crags and sweep the lizards down
From their warm basking-place with idle wand,
While under them the drowsy panther lies
Twitching his paw in his dark lair, and waits
Secure of springing when thy back is turned?
Popular power can stand but with the people:
Let them trust none a palm above themselves,
For sympathy in high degrees is frozen. . . . .
*Rienzi.* Peace, peace! confound me not.
*Wife.* The brave, the wise,
The just, are never, even by foes, confounded.
Promise me but one thing. If in thy soul
Thou thinkest this young woman free from blame,
Thou wilt absolve her, openly, with honour,
Whatever Hungary, whatever Avignon
May whisper or may threaten.
*Rienzi.* If my power
Will bear it; if the sentence will not shake
This scarlet off my shoulder—
*Wife.* Cola! Cola!

I have made the changes you wished at the deaths of Caraffa and Caraccioli, and you must add to where Andrea says 'he is 'gone:'

To think of this; to think how he has fallen
Amid his pranks and joyances, amid
His wild heath myrtle-blossoms, one might say,
It quite unmans me.
*Sancia.* Speak not so, my son:
Let others, when their nature has been changed
To such unwonted state, when they are call'd
To do what angels do and brutes do not,
Sob at their shame, and say they are unmann'd:
Unmann'd they can not be; they are not men.
At glorious deeds, at sufferings well endured,
Yea, at life's thread snapt with its gloss upon it,
Be it man's pride and privilege to weep.

This week I shall transcribe little more" (the first two acts came with the letter); "before the end of next, you shall have the whole. Should not the title of the first be *Andrea?* the second, *Giovanna?*—Or *Giovanna of Naples?* and the other, *Andrea of Hungary?*"

I had not had time to reply when the following day brought another letter. "The packet was sent to "the coach-office, and my letter in it; and now, five "minutes afterwards, I find I am about to trouble you "again, as usual. In fact I seldom write *straight on end* "as the hunters say, or in the house, but generally "while I am walking or riding, or sitting out in the "air; sometimes in a very small pocket-book, sometimes "on a scrap of paper. Do, in your long-suffering, paste "in this where Giovanna and her sister are together, "and she talks of life being made almost as welcome "to her as death itself. The other will reply:

> When sunshine glistens round,
> And friends as young as we are sit beside us,
> We smile at Death . . one rather grim indeed
> And whimsical, but not disposed to hurt us . .
> And give and take fresh courage. But, sweet sister,
> The days are many when he is unwelcome,
> And you will think so too another time.
> 'Tis chiefly in cold places, with old folks,
> His features seem prodigiously amiss.
> But Life looks always pleasant, sometimes more
> And sometimes less so, but looks always pleasant,
> And, when we cherish him, repays us well.

"And when, in the first part, they are talking of the "good king Robert, I would have this:

> *Fiammetta* (*to Filippa*). Have you not prais'd the king
> your very self
> For saying to Petrarca, as he did,
> 'Letters are dearer to me than my crown,
> 'And, were I forced to throw up one or other,
> 'Away should go the diadem, by Jove!'
> *Sancia.* Thou art thy very father. Kiss me, child:
> His father said it, and thy father would.
> When shall such kings adorn the throne again?
> *Fiammetta.* When the same love of what Heaven made
> most lovely
> Enters their hearts; when genius shines above them,
> And not beneath their feet."

On the last day of November the whole of the second tragedy was in my possession, and I had sent him further objections to portions of the first which it seemed desirable to alter. His reply came next day:

"Your objections are so admirably just, that it is almost a shame to deprive the world of them; yet I resolved from the first moment to abolish the whole scene of the old women; there is quite enough without it. Draw your pen unsparingly over every other passage that in any manner is discreditable to me. I wrote the songs in Italian because it is so incomparably easier than English, in which Moore alone writes short things gracefully. Mine were on a level with what are sung about the streets at Naples and elsewhere. There are so many conspiracies in tragedies, that nothing new could be devised. I have varied the old scheme by the diversified tones and feelings of Psein and the other two Hungarians, then of Maximin, then of Caraccioli and Caraffa. My frate Rupert has a slice of old Falstaff in him, not very perceptible. He is never at fault: this is the resemblance. Beside what you have shown me, I can find only to alter, the bringing back the queen dowager to take her seat with Giovanna when audience is given to the nobles; and, on the queen saying she would call round her all the good and wise, I would have king Robert's widow overhear those words as she returns.

> *Sancia* (*returning*). Daughter, no palace is too small to hold them.
> The good love other places, love the fields,
> And ripen the pale harvest with their prayers.
> Solitude, solitude, so dread a curse
> To princes, such a blight to sycophants,
> Is *their* own home, their healthy thoughts grow in it.
> The wise avoid all our anxieties:
> The cunning, with the tickets of the wise
> Push for the banquet, seize each vacant chair,
> Gorge, pat their spaniel, and fall fast asleep.

In the scene toward the close, where Andrea speaks of the mulberries, it should be, 'I wish the mulberries were not past,' because they not only were ripe, but over by above a month, in Naples; the marriage being on the 20th of September. The greater correction of substituting English for Italian I finished before I sent away my breakfast, and you will see it at length

on the opposite side. You are right in what you say of the theatre. I shrink from the acting. We will give up that idea, both for one and other of the dramas; and as to printing, you know I said openly I would publish no more."

What I replied on this latter point Landor took as good-naturedly as Benedick when rallied on his change of intention, and the tragedies were printed without waiting for completion of the trilogy. Few know anything of them; but enough, even in these letters, has been shown of their singular and exceptional beauty of thought and language, to justify such further explanatory words as may increase the reader's interest in them. They have no single figure of such grandeur of conception as *Julian;* but in another kind I doubt whether *Andrea* may not claim a place as distinct and separate, nor in a lower rank of poetical creation. Poetry has indeed few conceptions more touching than this boy-prince. Of Giovanna Landor takes the favourable view, as it was fairly open to him to do. She is to Italy what Mary Stuart is to Scotland, and different judgments of her will always exist; but any man may be justified in taking her character from the two Italians who were the most illustrious of her contemporaries: Boccaccio, who calls her the singular pride of Italy, so gracious, gentle, compassionate, and kind, that she seemed rather the companion than the queen of those around her; and Petrarca, who, in a strain hardly less affectionate, compares her and her young husband, surrounded by the Hungarians, to two lambs in the midst of wolves. Nor is that a bad description of Landor's first tragedy.

What indeed no one disputes to have been her position on the death of her grandfather, gives warrant for the view taken by Landor. Ill-fated as the marriage

was, it originated in king Robert's desire to compose the differences between Naples and Hungary by restoring the throne of Naples to the elder branch in the person of Andrea, without prejudice to the existing rights of Giovanna; but several years after the betrothment he discovered that Andrea, placed by the king of Hungary under the sole care of a wicked monk, had grown up into his helpless victim; indolent, idle, pliant, half silly it was supposed, certainly altogether ignorant; and it was resolved, as a protection to the youth, that Giovanna should be proclaimed queen in her own right. She was however but fifteen when the king died, Andrea being seventeen; and, by the time of her accession and marriage, the monk fra Rupert had so employed the two years' interval of regency in supplanting Neapolitan by Hungarian influence, that Giovanna and Andrea were become little better than his prisoners.

At this point the tragedy opens; and with the greatest delicacy the position of both queen and husband is expressed perfectly in the first scene. She, with wonderful beauty, is already a woman in fulness and generosity of soul, and wise beyond her years; he, a mere boyish stripling, is in mind and manners more boyish still, but ductile, gentle-hearted, compliant; and it is the triumph of Landor's achievement to have shown the influence of two such characters on each other. One sees that her expression of love at the outset is but a sweet hypocrisy; indeed she loves another; but she is so bent on being true to Andrea that her tenderness and compassion, trembling only on love's outermost verge, soon borrow from his glad simplicity and sprightly fondness something of his own affection; and still, as his mind opens under love for her, and new beauties of disposition respond to her influence over him, her own

eyes brighten more and more. But there is of course little for the stage in this; nor has the play otherwise the kind of contrasts required by tragedy. There are indeed plenty of shades of complexion, and diversities of manner, to show the artist; no one could mistake Sancia's gentle wisdom for the lofty intellect of Filippa: but the women are all so good and so generous that it takes a second reading, such as one cannot have at a theatre, to understand the niceties that separate each from the other; and, for even the motive that leads to the catastrophe, the same sort of study is required. In actual life this, no doubt, would be enough. We should want no more than our knowledge of the probable effect upon the mind of fra Rupert of the growing change in Andrea. But we cannot thus receive things for granted on the stage; we want a plot; character and motive must be in visible collision; and it will not do to have the agents of a catastrophe in as much apparent unconsciousness as ourselves of what they have in hand, until the catastrophe itself is upon us. This is the case with fra Rupert's Hungarians. They prowl about the court avenues and entrances like hungry wolves; each with his mark upon him; Zinga not to be mistaken for Klapwrath, or Psein for Maximin; but all of them mere shadows of something else, of which neither they nor we know anything except by remote suspicion. A power opposed to fra Rupert's might fairly have been found in the two gallant Neapolitan nobles who love Giovanna; but they are killed in the third act, and he remains the solitary genius of the scene. That this is what in life might have been probable does not of course dispose of the question of the stage; here, as in *Julian*, Landor fails in its necessary requirements; yet there are no finer studies in dramatic writing than

are afforded by both, in the rich fulness as well as easy flexibility of the verse, in the extraordinary beauty of the detached thoughts and sayings, and in the individual traits of character. The very want of passion in his wickedness which repels interest from fra Rupert in these earlier plays, and altogether unsuits him for the stage, helps to make him a wonderful creation, as we follow and track him out in the study. Present or absent, he is master of the scene. We see his horrible shadow, if not himself. We think him baffled by the modest firmness of Giovanna, or the light-hearted resistance of Andrea, but already his web encircles both. By the unexpected defiance of Caraffa and Caraccioli, we fancy him struck to the earth; but as he steals out from his cell through one passage, their lifeless bodies encumber the other. Resource never fails him. When all seems gay and joyous in the revels at Aversa, and we half incline to think the danger past, his crooked figure disguised and masked crawls in, joy gives place to terror, the lights at the brilliant balcony are extinguished, and, displacing suddenly the roses and festoons suspended there, the lifeless body of the poor Andrea swings heavily down. Even after the scene has closed we do not know the actual murderer. As in ordinary life, though not in ordinary tragedies, doubt remains with us. We know the heart that prompted, but not the hand that did the deed. There is nothing so fine as all this in the second part of the trilogy, which yet contains single passages superior to any in the first, and has a scene of Rienzi and his wife that would act greatly on the stage. This middle play is wholly occupied by Giovanna's appeal to the Pope and the Tribune, by her exculpation from the charge of Andrea's murder, and by her second marriage. Fra Rupert is on the scene, en-

deavouring to fix suspicion on Giovanna; but he plays an unimportant part.

Hardly had the *Andrea* and *Giovanna* appeared however, with intimation that the profits of the publication were to be given to a very humble but very noble heroine of that day who lives also in the page of Wordsworth, Grace Darling,* when I received an intimation from him that he was busy on the last of the trilogy, of which fra Rupert was to be hero.

"Being here alone for several days" (written from Bath in the autumn of 1840), "I was resolved to do what I was told would be very difficult, if not impossible: to give a little more interest to the character of Giovanna after her second, nay even after her third marriage. Certainly it is somewhat unromantic and unpoetical. Racine, in his *Andromache*, has made sad work of it, although he had but two to deal with. I had indeed maliciously lain in wait thus long for somebody to attempt it. Well, I must do it myself, I see. I have written now the last drama of the trilogy; imperfect no doubt, as you will discover, but better, I promise you, both as poetry and drama, than the two first. You will like what one of my characters says on reading Dante's story of Francesco da Rimini:

> Piteous, most piteous, for most guilty passion.
> Two lovers are condemned to one unrest
> For ages. I now first knew poetry,
> I had known song and sonnet long before:
> I sail'd no more amid the barren isles
> Each one small self; the mighty continent
> Rose and expanded; I was on its shores.

I felt something like this when disposing at last of my old friar. You shall see. But mind, I will not be damned for it. In other words, it shall never be offered to the stage. Popularity is not what I want, or care for. I have received from it all the pleasure and gratification I ever can receive; tender emotions, sweet

* ". . One whose very name bespeaks
Favour divine, exacting human love . .
Whom . . a single act endears to high and low
Through the whole land." *Wordsworth.*

and strong excitement, and the hope that it will communicate these to others."

The manuscript reached me a few days later, with what follows:

"Well, now I have netted my purse, have I drawn the two ends together as they should be? Have I kept up the frate's character, changing only by the change of fortune and pressure of circumstances? It was requisite to show Giovanna as mother and friend. Thus her character is completed by a few touches. Stephen and Maximin I hope and trust are not too light. It was the custom of the Athenian dramatists to make the last piece in the trilogy a farce, or farcical. This is the only thing in their literature inelegant or injudicious. We imitate it in some degree, by acting an after-piece to our tragedies. This however is not quite so bad, though bad enough."

I found a fair reason for this exulting tone on reading the play. My preachments to him on stage-requirements had not been without effect. This was the most dramatic of the three. Not so rich in poetry, and having fewer single sayings conspicuous for beauty; but with greater vigour of treatment, with characters more broadly contrasted, and with a hero not tragical in guilt alone, but also in remorse and suffering. It made a corresponding impression on those who read it; nor did any opinion expressed of it please Landor more, or with better reason, than his brother Robert's. "I can-
" not say" (Birlingham, 26th Dec. 1840) "that any-
" thing which you have written since has given me
" more pleasure than *Pericles and Aspasia;* for I am
" unable to imagine greater strength and originality
" of thought united with greater elegance and purity
" of language than that book contains. But I re-
" joice nevertheless at the publication of these dramas
" as fresh evidences that your powers are increased
" by time. Many men appear to have larger capa-

"cities and greater reasoning powers than they had "in the middle of life, even at a greater age than "yours; but I can remember no instance beside, at "such an age, where the imagination was more ener- "getic, and its manner of expression more original. I "will not suppose, that in giving me your *Fra Rupert*, "you have also given a right to trouble you with my "opinion; but I must say that it appears a far greater "work than *Count Julian*, written just thirty years ago. "The power of communicating so much meaning be- "yond what is expressed directly by words, is the most "extraordinary difference." Crabb Robinson had struck the same note, eight days before, in contrasting the unimpaired power of *Fra Rupert* with the many instances that were happening around to impress him with "a sense "of the danger to which all genius is exposed of decay- "ing prematurely;" Mr. Macready told him that the last part of the trilogy had taken stronger hold of him than either of its predecessors; Mr. James wrote with boundless enthusiasm of all the three; Julius Hare, more temperately describing his delight at receiving such a visitor "through the snow" to cheer him with visions of Neapolitan warmth and beauty, said to Landor that it now rested with him, Henry Taylor, and George Darley, to "preserve the life of tragedy in England;" and George Darley himself, whose fine dramatic genius well deserved that compliment, asking him where he got the power that gave to his commonest words an effect so magical, singled out, amid infinite praise of the last of the tragedies, those very portions* referred to by Landor

* The scene especially delighted Darley, where the wily friar wins to his black purpose Stephen the farmer. Stephen is fond of the substantial:

"Pleasant, too, are farms
When harvest-moons hang over them, *and wains*

as "light," but it was hoped not farcical, in his letters to me. I should perhaps add, with deference to so great an authority, that my old friend appears to have been in error in supposing that the third drama in a Greek trilogy was ever farcical. He probably confounded with it the satirical play subjoined to the trilogy, for the most part by way of contrast, though it might sometimes be connected with it in subject. The only remaining example of a part of a trilogy belonging to a continuous theme is the *Eumenides;* but, as it is plain that the *Prometheus*, the *Seven against Thebes*, and the *Suppliants* of Æschylus must all have been the middle dramas in trilogies, we may fairly derive from them what must have been the subjects of the third plays, and that they must all have been grave, solemn, and reconciling.

What I have to add, in quitting the subject of Landor's tragedies, concerns his brother Robert equally with him; but the facts to be stated have a curious interest apart from their illustration of character, and may be related by Mr. Robert Landor himself without com-

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*Jolt in the iron-tinged rut, and the white ox*
*Is call'd by name, and patted ere pull'd on.*"

But as to the uses, or *quid pro quo*, of money, the farmer differs from the friar rather in seeming than reality:

"*Rupert.* Don't squander all away. Few know
Its power, its privilege. It dubs the noble,
It raises from the dust the man as light,
It turns frowns into smiles, it makes the breath
Of sore decrepitude breathe fresh as morn
Into maternal ear and virgin breast.
*Stephen.* Is that all it can do? I see much farther.
I see full twenty hens upon the perch,
I see fat cheese moist as a charnel-house,
I see hogs' snouts under the door, I see
Flitches of bacon in the rack above.
*Rupert.* Rational sights! fair hopes! unguilty wishes!"

ment from me. I will merely premise that to his above-quoted letter of thanks for *Fra Rupert*, it was added, as what people call a strange coincidence, that he should have heard of dramas printed by his brother while printing some of his own. "Two of them have been "written many years, and were the amusement of "hours which I could not employ more usefully, for "I can sometimes write when I cannot read. This "indeed is no reason for publishing them; but a book "may serve as a small legacy, better adapted than any "other to remind those whom you have known in early "life of your thoughts and feelings. I will direct that "a copy shall be sent to you without requiring that you "should read one half of it. Nevertheless I am vain "enough to think that, as tragedies generally are now, "the first of them may prove worth the trouble." What Landor thought of them will be seen hereafter. Not in the first only, *The Earl of Brecon*, but in the last, *The Ferryman*, there is enough to give the writer distinguished place among the poets who have written in this form; and a volume altogether of purer English or loftier purpose, "high passions and high actions" more worthily describing, has seldom issued from the press in England than *The Earl of Brecon, Faith's Fraud, and the Ferryman*: "Tragedies by Robert E. Landor." But the writer's first dramatic attempt had been of earlier date, and the anecdotes now to be related have no reference to the publication of 1841.

"There is a strange history," wrote Mr. Landor to me (26th January 1865), "of which you have heard no-"thing, and for which I am unable to account. Among "Walter's later publications, perhaps the most original "and powerful, certainly the most characteristic as a "specimen of his genius, his poetical genius, are the

"three tragedies published in 1839-40; and, however "unsuited to the drama for representation, very admir- "able as poems. When we first met after their publi- "cation, at Birlingham, I asked whether he was aware "that a tragedy had been published, without preface "or author's name, the plot of which must seem to "have been borrowed in many of its scenes from his "*Andrea of Hungary*. However different in all other "respects, however poor and feeble the apparent imi- "tation, yet, besides many of the scenes, some of the "events and some even of the names corresponded. "Both tragedies were dated at Naples, and both in the "royal palace. The characters were principally the royal "family. There was a conspiracy in both, and the "conspirators were monks. The catastrophe was in the "palace, at a masked ball; and in both, though lan- "guage was never copied, there were many of the same "passions, emotions, and other smaller correspondences of "description, especially in this masked ball. My brother "was much surprised: supposing that some audacious "imitator had borrowed the only part within his reach; "much of the plot, some of the characters, but none "of the power; many of the incidents and contrivances, "but none of the genius. His astonishment was still "greater when I referred him to the title-pages of both "tragedies: *his* publication being dated 1839, and the "supposed copy 1824, just forty years from this now pre- "sent time. Greater yet was his wonder, when I told "him that I was the author of this supposed imitation, "written almost twenty years before the original, and "published sixteen. It happened that we were inter- "rupted by some visitors before he had time to finish "my work, or there could be any explanation on the "subject; and he never afterwards referred to it, nor

"did I. Southey had noticed, in his *Doctor*, what he "called a family likeness; and my brother has been "often mortified by the mistake of one for the other. "Infinite as the difference may be in ability, there "may be some resemblance in feeling and the mode of "expressing it; but this would not account for the "mechanism, the plot, the many correspondences of "the two tragedies. My brother indeed would never "have borrowed consciously from any man, and least "of all from me; but I know that he continually for-"got what he had written, and denied (till they were "produced) that he had ever seen various passages in "his printed books. Possibly he may have read this "tragedy of mine, without any remembrance after-"wards that he had seen it; or met with a review of "it without knowing who had written either the tra-"gedy or the criticism, for at that time we had no cor-"respondence or communication: and so, many years "after, he may have mistaken memory for invention.

"Thus much has been said by me to account for "his denial, on many occasions, of what he had him-"self written. A lady, with whom he had become ac-"quainted through me, used to prepare for his visits "by reading such of his publications, verse and prose, "as contained moral and philosophical maxims, or "thoughts beautifully and pointedly expressed. Ming-"ling them with other quotations, she recited very cor-"rectly, on one occasion, what he had so written; and in "return, he complimented the lady by supposing that she "had composed them, declaring that no one else could "have equalled them! and at the last, while he avowed "that he had utterly forgotten them, protesting that "even still he could hardly believe he had himself writ-"ten them—*which I believe to be true.* I have as good a

" memory as most people who have lived eighty-four " years, and I am not careless about the truth; but I am " often reminded by my servants, not only of things for- " gotten by me, but of intended directions which I had " neglected to give. Add to this confusion of memory " my brother's activity of imagination, and much will " be accounted for. Fact and fancy become also easily " confounded; and there are infirmities, apart from " those of old age, for which none of Walter's friends " could otherwise account, but by wanderings permitted " to the imagination."

"You ask," Mr. Robert Landor wrote again to me (12th Feb. 1865), "whether the tragedy to which I had " referred in proof of my brother's imperfect memory " was the *Count Arezzi?* As there is an introduction " to this curious history which may help in explaining " it, I will venture on your patience once more. I had " written the tragedy two years earlier than the date " in the title-page (1824), not knowing who would " undertake its publication. At last it was intrusted " to Mr. Booth of Duke-street, Portland-place. Mr. " Booth had a relative connected with one of the thea- " tres, to whom he showed the manuscript; and this " gentleman was on familiar terms with Mr. Young, a " tragic actor of high reputation, contemporary with " Kean, I think: but no one knows less of the theatre " than I do. Mr. Young thought that the principal " character, Arezzi, might be undertaken by himself; " he wished that the more comic part, Cimbella, should " be committed to one of the Kembles, either Charles or " Stephen; and he said that if the author would allow " him to make such reductions and alterations as were " necessary, he would bring it on the stage. Never hav- " ing had the slightest thought of its representation, I at

" once declined the offer; and thereupon it was published,
" at the close of 1823, without any name. Mr. Booth
" was as much surprised as I was at its success, a large
" part of the edition being very speedily sold; it was also
" favourably noticed in several critical papers; and Mr.
" Booth informed me that if I proposed to make any
" change or corrections, I must prepare them for a second
" edition. At the same time he said that inquiries and
" rumours had reached him, supposing the tragedy to
" have been written by Lord Byron: and I had seen, in
" one of the reviews, that probably it was an experiment
" on the public taste by a distinguished author, whose
" other tragedies were composed with motives and
" feelings totally different, but who would soon reveal
" himself. All Lord Byron's dramas had been pub-
" lished before; *Werner*, the last of them, less than a
" year before. At once, then, my success was ac-
" counted for! I was so unjust as to suspect that Mr.
" Booth had encouraged the report, or at least permitted
" it by his silence. But not wishing to partake in a
" fraud from which both Lord Byron and the public
" must suffer, I immediately directed that the tragedy
" should be again advertised, with my name; and also
" that there should be a title-page prefixed to all the
" copies that were yet unsold. Mr. Booth remons-
" trated earnestly, disclaiming all knowledge; but as the
" copyright was mine, I prevailed. I cannot tell how
" many copies remained, but I do not think that, in
" the forty years since then, so many as forty more have
" been sold. I was extinguished at once. To be sure,
" Lord Byron survived; but it may be doubted whe-
" ther he would have forgiven any man who had con-
" founded the authorship of two such dramas, even
" supposing them to have been written experiment-

" ally. These of my brother are as unlike mine (ex-
" cepting in the instances arising from a bad memory),
" and, I think, as much superior to *Werner* as *Werner*
" is to the *Count Arezzi*. But it seems scarcely possible
" to account for so many resemblances in the mechan-
" ism, without supposing that Walter may have read
" either my tragedy or some account of it; and, many
" years after, may have mistaken memory for inven-
" tion. Assuredly he had no knowledge of the author, or
" suspicion of him; but, after having read most of the
" drama, and learnt from me its history, he never said
" another word on the subject. It is to free his cha-
" racter from distressing imputations that I have given
" this long history. He continually denied that he had
" written what was to be found in his own books, or
" spoken what had been heard by twenty people. He
" once related to me a long conversation with a friend
" of yours, with many minute particulars, on a very
" important subject; and two years after, when it was
" referred to by me accidentally, he declared that no-
" thing of the kind had ever occurred, and that I must
" have dreamed. Your history of him must excite much
" attention, because it is yours; and perhaps some pass-
" ing observation on this infirmity might anticipate
" what it would not be very possible to disprove, or
" otherwise to account for."

## IV. Reviewing a Reviewer.

Any remark upon the question thus raised by Mr. Robert Landor I have not thought necessary. The likeness of the later to the earlier tragedy, apart from that indefinable likeness to each other which would seem to have been as inseparable from the poetry of

the brothers as it often is from the voices of sisters singing, turns chiefly on the management of the catastrophe in each; and, though raising the strongest presumption that Landor had seen his brother's work, is only of interest for the illustration to which his brother applies it. That is just, unquestionably; and of the fact that such failures of memory involved no wilful departure from truth, strongly insisted on by me in former pages, there occurred soon after the present date an example as decisive as could be given. Upon *Blackwood* making some objections to his *Pericles and Aspasia*, he had sent back to his publishers, as we have seen, every shilling paid for the copyright; yet, only three years after a proceeding so remarkable, he had forgotten, not merely that anything had ever been paid him for the book, but, more marvellous still, that he had himself sent the money back. "I published *Pericles and Aspasia* on my own account," he reiterated; and was sending further remittances in satisfaction of the supposed loss, when I stopped him by a statement from Mr. Saunders himself.*

Nor was it his failing commonly to remember a review that might have vexed him, any more than the turn his vexation might have taken. With a sharp violent word all generally was over; and he knew no comfort in life so great, he would say, as to get safely delivered of a curse. Even that he could sometimes spare, and be content, as

* "Never, in the course of my life," he wrote to me, "was I so "surprised as at the *verification* of my account with Saunders; for "such it is. Certain I am that no part of the money was ever spent "by me, nor can I possibly bring to mind either the receiving or "the returning of it. But never in my lifetime have I kept any "accounts, and every autumn I save something, because, in the "months of December and January, I give to poor families half the "income of those two months. A person unerring in her judgment "and boundless in her goodness helps me to find them out."

when told of the *Quarterly* reviewing him soon after the *Pentameron*, with wondering where they would find their telescope, or with declaring, from accounts sent him a little later, that the glasses were all it wanted. But he was really anxious that his own discredit with the reviews at this time should not extend to his brother's tragedies. "The literary congress have condemned me to "St. Helena," he wrote to me, "but I hope my name "will cause no prejudice to my brother's. For a quar- "ter of a century we have had no correspondence until "now: the last was an angry one. However, he has "shown himself by far the greatest dramatic poet of "our time." It is right to add that whether he thus quietly accepted the treatment extended to himself, or wasted anger on it, it was the rarest of all possible things with him to venture upon any thing like reply. There are only two instances known to me in which he attempted it; and, by a remarkable chance, though both replies were written, both were suppressed, and now for the first time both see the light. I have printed one, in a former page, written sixty-eight years ago, after *Gebir* was noticed by the *Monthly Review;* and am now about to print the other, written thirty-one years ago, after the *Pentameron* was reviewed in the *British and Foreign Quarterly*, which, as I was the means of inducing him at this time very reluctantly to lay aside, I have now less scruple in publishing. It is an admirable specimen of his manner, and is filled with illustrations of his character and opinions.

His first mention of the review was in a letter to me at the close of 1838:

"I am told there is an ill-tempered and captious article in the *British and Foreign Review* on my *Pentameron*. I began to look into it when it came, but I have not had time to go on

with it. They tell me it is Hallam's. Unless he talks of poetry, he is not likely to talk like a blockhead. But he praises some lines of Milton as very superlative which have little harmony, and, with an ear that seems to have been cut out of the callus of his heel, he compares with Catullus those wretched Latin versifiers among the modern Italians; fellows in whom is no vigour of thought, no novelty of expression. He might have acquired some information on this matter, if he had read what is printed at the end of my Latin poems. He would at least have found a pretty sprinkling of their false quantities, puerilities, and tomfooleries; and that praise also is given wherever a hand is lifted high enough to reach it."

I at once doubted the alleged authorship. Not that I differed greatly from his estimate of the admirable critic of history and somewhat questionable critic of poetry to whom he ascribed the review, except that he underrated his learning; but I knew they had met (I think at his friend Sir Charles Elton's), that he had come off second-best in argument, as most people did with Hallam, and that a hasty judgment in the present matter would be a very natural consequence. Landor had laughingly repeated to me what Lord Dudley told Francis Hare, of his having dined with Hallam and his son in Italy, when "it did my heart good to "sit by, and hear how the son snubbed the father, "remembering how often the father had unmercifully "snubbed me;" and I perhaps had too much fear that upon some such principle he was now doing his own heart good. With great difficulty I kept back what he subsequently sent me for the printer; and I certainly afterwards had reason for questioning one argument I had confidently employed in proof that Hallam could not have written the review. But whether this was so or not, little matters now. The personal bitterness is passed away, and a publication which now can give pain to no one will probably give pleasure to many.

"Certainly this review of my *Pentameron* was not done in the same spirit, or with the same judgment, or by the same author as the previous remarks on my *Imaginary Conversations* in the same periodical, *The British and Foreign*. Heavy boys never play well at leap-frog; and the broader the back is over which they attempt to leap, the greater must be their exertion, or the greater will be their failure.

"Hear what this heavy boy says:

'Mr. Landor's *entire* sympathies are with the ancient *rather* than
' with the modern world.'

If they are entirely with the one, they have nothing at all to do with the other: the 'rather,' then, is an impropriety, an absurdity. The fly buzzes about Mr. Landor's pine-apple just as alertly as if it could penetrate its bosses, and taste its flavour.

Vix tenuis pervenerit aura.

'Homer and Aristotle, Ovid and Cicero, are his *divines*, in spite
' of the commendation he bestows on Hooker and Barrow.'

This is false and foolish. I certainly do prefer Homer and Aristoteles to Hooker and Barrow, the former in range of intellect, the latter both in the range of intellect and in the spirit of investigation; but neither in *divinity*: Ovid and Cicero still less.

'The *native* impulse and bias of his intellect is, in argumenta-
' tion, towards the palpable, the practical, the orderly, rather than
' to questions of *higher* intellectual pith and moment.'

Certainly: for such is the office and tendency of intellect. But what is '*higher* pith'? I am willing to be carped at by such empty mouths for preferring what Bacon preferred, 'the palpable, the practical, the orderly,' to this indigestible 'pith,' and this intractable '*moment*;' while as to Aristoteles and Homer, never were two ampler minds or stored with better things, and how *palpable*, how *practical*, how *orderly* are both! Ovid is scoffed at here, as schoolmasters and reviewers have scoffed at him from time immemorial. Shall I tell them a secret? There are four pieces of epic poetry far transcendent above all others; and I will mention them in the order of dates: the colloquy of Achilles and Priam in the *Iliad*, the contention of Ulysses and Ajax in the *Metamorphoses*, the first book of *Paradise Lost*, and the battle in *Marmion*. But there are single acts in Shakespeare worth all these put together.

'Mr. Landor *believes himself to be*, and is frequently represented
' as, an uncompromising democrat!'

False again, at least in the first position. Mr. Landor entertains as much contempt for the democrats as for the whigs, but he loves all liberal opinions, all liberal institutions, all liberal men. His few friends are chiefly tories, and he would be loth to change the least valuable of them for a dozen of those ring-droppers who stand opposite. There are indeed some in power who have been friendly and even familiar, but his only wish in regard to them is that they may retain their integrity, which is easier lost than place. He cannot but remember that among the whigs there was a Rockingham, a Charlemont, and a Grattan; and he will not close his eyes on those benches on which are yet sitting a Clarendon, a Fitzwilliam, and a Newport. Nor are these the only disinterested, the only judicious men of the party. But there are too many far different, too many who cry out to the people, 'You wanted a movement:
' so did we: shuffling is our natural gait; and is not shuffling a
' movement?'

'Plato is the *cynosure* of Mr. Landor's *dislikes!*' [strange expression!] 'and the philosopher who has exhausted the admiration and
' *taxed* the powers of the most subtle thinkers in every age is *repre-*
' *sented* in the *Imaginary Conversations* as an inexact reasoner, incon-
' sistent in his doctrines, and luxuriant and rank in his diction.'

One passing remark on the word *tax*. It often means *imposition*. The passages in which the powers of the philosopher are thus '*represented*' are quoted by me in the original Greek: is there a single instance in which they are *mis*represented? It would be easy to adduce at least fifty more, beside those in the *Chesterfield and Chatham*, in the *Plato and Diogenes*. No injury is done to the greatest writer, or the best man, by showing his defects and inaccuracies. I have shown very many in Bacon himself, even in the small volume of his *Essays*, and I have detected a vast number more, equally indefensible, in his other and larger works. In the *Barrow and Newton* I passed over several objections, mindful in what character I was standing. Enough had also been done, regarding Plato, to urge the loiterer to plunge into deep water for wholesome exercise instead of staying to catch cold and fever among the dank luxuriance on that slippery brink. Such men as my critic should reverence Plato, and do no more: but there are others, Bacon for in-

stance, and Newton, who are permitted to weigh him; and these may praise him where praise is due, which itself is no light privilege, and where censure is due may reprehend him. Rising from this task and going away again, I just pointed with my forefinger to that obscurity which appeared so mysterious and so sacred, where are deposited in disorder and dismemberment the spiced abortions of an illusory meretricious philosophy. The spell of tradition must be very strong on that man who believes in the *Phædo*, and in all that is said of it. Its arguments are sophistry, and its eloquence is dithyrambic. But this the English reader now enjoys an opportunity of judging for himself, since Shelley has translated that dialogue, who knew the Greek, who loved his author, and who alone, of all our writers, comes up to him in the suavity of his language.

When Bacon was declared in the college-halls to have subverted the Aristotelian mode of philosophising, he was strangely misrepresented. Aristoteles, as well as himself, subjected the immaterial to demonstration, the material to experiment; the main difference between them being that the Greek was the wiser man of the two, in not projecting all his wisdom out of himself, but reserving a good part of it to employ in the guidance of his own life and actions. He and Bacon were both aware that light in some matters touches only the surface, and in none goes far beyond; and that the same may be said of philosophy. But light, according to the substance it penetrates, hath its fixt and certain boundaries; and philosophy its imaginary lines, which future discoveries may extend. For the attainment of this purpose, we must walk on along paths both beaten and unbeaten; we must stop often, examine closely, discuss freely; and we must not lie upon our backs with our mouths agape for dreams, nor believe we are pious because we are puerile, nor be confident and certain we imbibe the freshest wisdom because we catch it out of the deepest shade.

'In the *Pentameron* Dante, though upon the whole *less an object* '*of distaste*, being saved from rough treatment not, as in the *Inferno*, 'by getting upon Virgil's back, but by the transcendent beauty of 'particular passages of his *Vision*, is equally misapprehended in the 'connection, the transitions, and the scope of his immortal work.'

Now to ask the simplest question in the gentlest tone: Is not this rather impudent? And who, pray, is the author of such remarks? Some Shelley, best and most congenial interpreter of Plato's dreams? some Coleridge, poet, metaphysician,

dialectician, and critic? some Southey, to whom nearly all European languages are open, all poetical secrets known? some Carey, long conversant both with Plato and with Dante, and profound in the philosophy of the schoolmen?

Velim pol! inquis, at pol ecce rusticus!

'Acute and comprehensive as Mr. Landor's intellect unquestion-
' ably is, and nurtured and instructed with

Soul-sustaining songs of ancient lore,
And philosophic wisdom clear and mild,

' it is nevertheless potent within a certain circle only.'

Really! and pretty well too! for no human intellect, not even Bacon's, rose up to and penetrated *all* circles!

'It flags and falls whenever the idea of the infinite, whether as
' a postulate in philosophy or as a fact in theology, is presented to
' it.'

No such thing: it neither flags nor falls, but turns its back upon it, well knowing the folly of pursuing what cannot be reached, and grasping at what cannot be comprehended. Mr. Landor was never such a mischievous idler as to set folks about searches in dark places for vain and useless objects, telling them that the wind, which he knows must blow their candle out, will direct them. People like our critic sing out the schoolboy's canticle, to which Aristophanes seems to have set the music:

Open your mouth and shut your eyes, and see what God will send you.

We remember what the godsend in such cases was usually composed of; and Plato's is often but little more. Shelley praises him for being the first who laid down the doctrine that states ought to be governed, not by the strongest or the wealthiest, but the wisest. Do we not however collect this doctrine from Homer, both in the *Iliad* and *Odyssea?* And Homer's temperate wisdom would also have shown him clearly that such rulers are rarely to be found in elective governments, where eloquence, wealth, and valour will usually captivate, and often mislead the ignorant; of which description the great body of voters always has been and always will be composed. These never can know the most virtuous, whom they seldom have any opportunity of conversing with, and whom they would dislike the more for it. The great body of mankind wants and will find excitement, and

either will avoid, or trample down, those enclosures of wisdom and virtue in which are cultivated only sedatives.

'*We* suspect however,' &c.

'Figaro lì, Figaro là, Figaro quì, Figaro quà.' *We* here, *we* there, *we* everywhere. What a *wee* figure do all these *we*'s make!

'We suspect however that Petrarca, or rather his present mover
' and mouthpiece, the author of the *Pentameron*, has not considered
' with sufficient accuracy the *Divina Commedia* in reference to its
' *position in the scale* of imaginative and initiatory works, *the time*
' *of its composition*, the life and education of its author, and its dif-
' ferent effects upon contemporaries and posterity.'

Strange confused language! this *position in the scale!* and *scale* of what? 'Imaginative and *initiatory* works.' What works are those? Petrarca, whom I represent speaking of Dante, must have known what effect he had on his contemporaries pretty nearly as well as a Marybone critic in the year of Victoria's coronation, but certainly he knew somewhat less about the effect he was to produce on remote posterity. In fact, his business was only with the positive and demonstrable faults of the poem, on which his friend Boccaccio was going to deliver a course of lectures in the city of Florence.

'Æschylus went into *banishment* because he could not endure a
' rival.'

He never went into banishment at all: and this accusation of jealousy is grossly injurious, against one of the most honourable of men, and, with a sole exception, the most animated and sublime of ancient poets. Undoubtedly he was pained at being thrust down from the eminence he first had occupied and had held for many years. He left a country where his merits were less acknowledged for one where nobody could contest them. But his nature was ever averse from envy, and he probably was as tolerant of Sophocles and of Euripides in poetry as he was of Miltiades and of Themistocles in war. Sophocles was fortunate in coming forth when his countrymen were in the enjoyment of victory and peace, and fully at leisure to admire the equable polish and commodious structure of his dramas. He may be said figuratively to have lived under Jupiter; Æschylus under the Titans. Sophocles is the only Athenian who worthily describes the character of women. His Antigone and Deïanira are such as Shakespeare himself would never have repented of creat-

ing; yet it is in his female characters that Shakespeare's might and dominion is the most especially displayed, and where his predecessors and his contemporaries (deficient in all essentials) are most deficient. If you collected all the poets of the world together, with all the men they ever produced, you might perhaps raise a showy and imposing, not however a formidable, coalition against Shakespeare; but his women would beat them instantly from the field.

'It is an error to suppose that Dante considered the *Inferno* and '*Purgatorio* as a string of satires, part in narrative, part in action. 'The satire *that is found* in the *Commedia* has more the sound of 'the *scourge* and fetters than of the *whip*.'

Faith! a curious kind of satire to sound like *fetters!* And it requires a better ear than either of those the critic's nightcap covers to distinguish the sound of a *scourge* from the sound of a *whip*.

'Considering the vast and varied ground of the *Vision*, there is 'not enough of either *national or individual* satire—'

Evidently he means 'of satire on nations or individuals;' but the expression is not English or sense—

'to render it likely that Dante intended to compose a succession of 'invectives.'

Dante has done it however, and to a greater extent than ever was done before or since in any one serious poem: and Dante was not a man likely to do what he never intended, to miss his aim, to fall short of it, or to overshoot it. He wished to be a satirist, and a satirist he was, but by no means of the best description. Of satire there are two kinds, assuming various forms. Comedy takes the higher of these; in which Aristophanes is the most poetical, Shakespeare the most humorous, and Molière the most facetious and witty. Among the Romans are Plautus and Terence, clever copyists of tame originals, but holding the keys which open the storehouse of all that is sound and precious in latinity. Of another species are Catullus and Horace; of whom the first has the stronger wing, the last the oilier feather. But among the same people are two far different from these, Lucretius and Juvenal. Juvenal is coarse and obscene, but always masculine, sometimes poetical. Lucretius is much loftier, and not only than Juvenal, but than all other of the Roman poets. He points alike to the crowd of

the puny and pusillanimous, and to the smaller and more contemptible of the turbulent and ambitious, not with the painted stick of a constable, but with the laureate truncheon of a commander. Take for instance the commencement of the second book, and the termination of the third, resounding like the brazen portals of some vast temple solemnly closed behind us.

'Ovid is an *established* favourite with Mr. Landor. He puts into 'Boccaccio's mouth somewhat extravagant praise, when he is made 'to say, "I do not think Ovid the best poet that ever lived, but I '"think he wrote the most of good poetry, and, in proportion to its '"quantity, the least of bad and indifferent." Our own *experience* 'would lead us to invert this sentence, and to say that, considering 'how much tedious and vapid verse Ovid wrote, it is marvellous he 'should have produced *some* so very good.'

Has Ovid written so much 'tedious verse' as the great Lucretius? and yet no reader ever found it marvellous that he should have produced some so very good. Has Ovid written so much both tedious and vapid as the glorious Dante? Certainly not; and yet nobody wonders that Dante has written some, and much, superlatively excellent. The *experience* of the reviewer can help him on but a little way in correcting his judgment of poetry. *Experientia docet* is an ancient adage: *Experientia debuit docere!* is quite as ancient an ejaculation and interjection. The experience of dull scholars, which at best is tradition, can but imperfectly warm the heart that nature never formed for eloquence and enthusiasm. There is much in the character and style of Ovid which his imitator Ariosto has attained, but there is also much which lies beyond him. The faults are easier and more seductive. There is in both the same lax facility of verse, the same indulgence in loose description; but Ovid is more pathetic and more sublime. In regard to Ariosto, he is what Titian is in regard to Albano. His *Epistles of the Heroines*, always much under-rated, show a diversity, a distinctness of character, a vigour of thought, a play of imagination, which, had he written no other work, would have entitled him to take his seat very near the highest of the Roman poets. In all his pieces, in these particularly, he has displayed a species of dramatic power to which no other of them (now extant) has attained; for Livy, who is both more epic and more dramatic, and of a loftier genius than any of them, wrote in prose. Has Ovid, has Lucan, has any one manipulated such balderdash and bombast as the nineteen verses at the close of that invocation

which Virgil in his *Georgics* tagged to the plain and modest but solemn prayer of Varro? The invocation was already much too long without them, and together it resembles a Corinthian portico before the thatched habitation of a goatherd. Yet, with defects that place him below the other two great poets of Rome, Virgil has that which within his range is unrivalled. In much of his produce Lucretius is austere and crude: Ovid is over-ripe: Virgil is neither, but seasonable and mature. But, again, to drop the metaphor, Lucretius is more vigorous and more elevated than he, Ovid is more versatile and inventive. Such at least is my opinion of them; and Milton, a higher authority, gave (in respect to Ovid) a similar award.

'We have only the rough draught of his best poem.'

This is untrue of the *Metamorphoses*. He would have corrected it, he tells us, *si licuisset*, but it bears no resemblance to a 'rough draught;' and only a very unpractised eye, a very unpoetical heart, could have thus grossly mistaken it. What a gallery of pictures is here! what a floor of mosaic! what a ceiling of arabesques! Is there any poem, excepting the *Odyssea*, that presents so many figures, so many attitudes, such beauty in such variety? Yet we hear nothing of Ovid but his want of judgment! O that his critics had the thousandth part of it! the millionth of his genius! I cannot but believe that the depreciation of this great unfortunate began with his sentence of exile. It was then thought unsafe to praise him; it is now thought unsound. Such is the hold of authority and tradition on the servile sprinklers and the superstitious catechumens of criticism!

We have heard enough, but the dogmatical and stupid think we never can hear enough, about the conceits in Ovid. On this subject I have spoken already, both in the *Imaginary Conversations* and in the *Dissertation* appended to my Latin poems printed in Italy, in which I have pointed out worse faults in Virgil, and more of them. If the gentlemen who amuse themselves and the public by their criticisms would take the trouble to peruse this *Dissertation*, it would show them that what some have said is not always what others should say, and that old opinions, like many old things, are sometimes of little value, and nowise the better for wearing. A playful and somewhat petulant and obtrusive puerility, much as it may be reprehended, is less unwelcome in most departments of poetry,

indeed in most other places, than a heavy pedantry or an inane bombast; and it would be difficult to find in Ovid a dozen blemishes of the kind imputed to him. I have detected in Virgil at least thirty much graver, and rather more than a just proportion in his elaborate work the *Georgics;* and is that great poet—for great poet he is, whatever the Germans and the germanised may oppose to the assertion of his dignity—is he to be thrust under the monsters that romp in all their wildness on the uncleanly straw now scattered over the continent? What heart has not been softened by his tenderness? what ear has not been captivated by his harmony? Yet the Virgilian scheme of versification is scanty in final sounds, in which the English seems to be richer than any but the Greek. In truth, it began to be the fashion in Virgil's day to contract and impoverish what was already too poor and contracted, and to terminate every heroic verse with a dissyllable or trisyllable. Ennius and Lucretius have left behind them memorable proofs what variety, what richness, is given by polysyllabic terminations: but Ovid committed the Virgilian fault in the hexameter, and, pursuing a similar scheme, extended the system to the pentameter. With Catullus and Propertius before his eyes, he yet snipped all the skirts of his *five-feet* brigade to the same measure: dissyllables closed every alternate line: and with what result we know. We are instructed at our schools that an offence against this law is a capital one; and we retain throughout life nearly all the wrong impressions we receive there. Hence the false estimation in which the classics are relatively holden. Hence, for ever recorded and repeated, the 'puerility' of Ovid's *Epistles*. Hence the 'sublimity' of the *Pollio*, and the 'majesty' of the *Georgics*, not only in the storm, which is grand indeed, but in its Augustus between the Scales and the Scorpion, in its head of Orpheus cut clean off and singing down the Hebrus, and in its Proteus, an intractable monster grown suddenly tender-hearted and gracefully poetical, concerning a woman of a country he never in all probability could have heard of, and while he was sorely enthralled by a stout fellow who came to inquire about a beehive. Hence, in short, the judgment of Virgil proclaimed to be superior even to Homer's, whom no poet ever equalled in it! And judgment is after all the truest criterion of a great poet. For if imagination knows not where to settle, it may almost as well be away; and if characters are inconsistent, they can ill conciliate our interest, and may be at once dismissed. The

structure of the *Iliad* is perfect, and the hero is endued with all those qualities which the poem required. The *Æneid*, on the contrary, is 'without form and void,' an epic of episodes, a faded tissue of loose improbabilities; and the hero is more fitted to invade a hencoop than to win a kingdom or a woman. Even Napoleon Buonaparte, whose eyes were seared with conflagrations and besmeared with blood, could discern how Virgil totters at Tenedos and at Troy. His Proteus, his wooden horse, his more wooden hero, are such lumber as never came from the blockhouse of Ovid on the snows of Tomi. How inferior is his Winter to Hesiod's! his Dido to the Medea of Apollonius! Yet gravity and stateliness make men look up to him; and the exquisite harmony of his versification deludes the ear and leads astray the judgment. It is not by single verses that we can learn the scale of our great composer. For the sake of informing my critic how the most harmonious sentence may be constructed of verses in themselves and singly by no means melodious, I will transcribe the most eloquent and thrilling one in all the compositions of this admirable musician.

> Mene fugis? Per ego has lacrimas dextramque tuam te,
> Quando aliud mihi jam miseræ nihil ipsa reliqui,
> Per connubia nostra, per inceptos hymenæos,
> Si bene quid de te merui, fuit aut tibi quidquam
> Dulce meum, miserere domûs labentis, et istam,
> Oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem.

'We believe F. Schlegel is correct in saying that naturally Horace 'had a much deeper and more generous vein of poetry in him than 'Virgil, and that, had he not *strayed early into a wrong path*, he 'might have produced a great national poem.'

No poet capable of producing a great national poem ever strayed *inextricably* into a 'wrong path.' But what wrong path did Horace stray into? And what indication has he ever displayed of such a power and tendency as M. Schlegel would exhibit in him? Not the slightest of the kind in all his writings. Yet there are beautiful things in them, of many species. But he wanted power and energy: he was unable to carry shield and buckler throughout a long march; and it was not only on the field of Pharsalia that he cast them down in lassitude and exhaustion. Even in the compass of an ode he grows impatient of labour, feels it too much for him, and tells us it ill suits the

lightness of his lyre. His most heroic one, *Cælo tonantem* &c, is no proof whatever of his epic qualifications: and nothing can be imagined less pathetic than another which has been often much admired for its pathos:

> Quis desiderio sit *pudor aut* modus
> Tam cari capitis? Præcipe lugubres
> Cantus, *Melpomene!* &c.

He loses a friend, and appeals to Melpomene for help to make him cry! The eyes of the true mourner want only their own tears. How greatly more tender and affecting are the verses of Catullus on his brother! which however I am certain will not escape the reprehension of my fine-eared critic for their clumsiness and harshness:

> Multas per genteis et multa per æquora vectus,
> Adveni has miseras, frater, ad inferias,
> Ut te postremo donarem munere mortis,
> Et mutum nequidquam adloquerer cinerem,
> Quandoquidem fortuna mihi tete abstulit ipsum:
> Heu nimis indigne frater ademte mihi!
> Nunc tamen interea, prisco quæ more parentum
> Tradita sunt (tristeis munera ad inferias)
> Accipe, fraterno multum manantia fletu,
> Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale!

These verses, in the sixth of which I have written *nimis* for *miser*, as I think the author did, we carry with us in the throbbing heaviness of our hearts: the others we reject as importunate and fictitious. In vain would you look in these *inferiæ* for anything ornamental or novel. The verses are slow, solemn, sad: there is only one movement in them; a movement from the salt cake and warm milk in its black patera, to the urn containing the ashes of the departed brother. If ever sighs and sobs were heard in the chambers of death, surely we hear them throughout those incondite and incontrollable words,

> Et mutum nequidquam adloquerer cinerem.

Warton, if I remember, in his essay on the genius and writings of Pope, extols the Galliambic of Catullus above all Roman poetry whatsoever. The praise is a little extravagant, although the Galliambic has indeed a grave and severe majesty about it, such as haunted the forests of Ida and befitted the sanctuary of the great goddess. It is grand and awful, and

approaches nearer to the pure ideal of poetry than perhaps any other in any language. But marbles of one cubit in height are never to be compared with the Pallas of the Parthenon, or with the Olympian Jove. The Galliambic, and ten more poems of Catullus, place him nevertheless upon a higher level than Horace, out of whose Odes, at the same time, a far greater number than ten of delightful beauty could be selected. Yet there is nothing in them whereon to ground a supposition that he was capable of constructing 'a great national' or other great poem: whereas in Catullus there are ample and satisfactory indications of this ability; for instance, more especially in the description of Ariadne. What is more striking than her first appearance? what is more terrific than her adjuration,

> Eumenides, quibus anguineo redimita capillo
> *Frons expirantes præportat pectoris iras,*
> Huc, huc adventate!

What is more tender and pathetic than the fifteen verses beginning with

> Certe ego te in medio versantem turbine lethi?

All this labour of the poet was expended on a piece of tapestry: but for a piece of tapestry were designed those cartoons of Raffael, which, together with the Elgin marbles, are the greatest wealth the arts have bequeathed to England, placing her on an equality, inasmuch as possession can confer it, with Italy herself. But I must return to my reviewer.

'If we are right in ascribing profoundness rather than sublimity, 'and pictorial power rather than ideal beauty, to the *Divina Com-* '*media* as a whole, *most if not all* of Mr. Landor's objections to '*particular* sections and passages will fall to the ground.'

Not one: and how should they? Mr. Landor has no more questioned the sublimity or the profoundness of Dante, than his readers will question whether he or his critic is the more competent to measure them. To judge properly and comprehensively of Dante, first the poetical mind is requisite; then, patient industry in exploring the works of his contemporaries, and in going back occasionally to those volumes of the schoolmen which lie dormant in the libraries of his native city. Profitable too are excursions in Val d'Arno and Val d'Elsa, and in those deep recesses of the Apennines, where the elder language is yet abiding in its rigid strength and fresh austerity. Twenty years and unbroken leisure have afforded to Mr. Landor a small

portion of such advantages, at least of the latter; a thousand could pour none effectually into this *pertusum vas.*

'On these grounds and on no other are some of the dooms in the 'Inferno intelligible; for that these *punishments* are in any consider- 'able proportion allegorical we quite disallow.'

Who said they were? in *any* proportion, considerable or inconsiderable. The *dooms*, God knows, are intelligible enough, and require none of 'these grounds' to render them plainer. In the *Pentameron* the frequency of them, and the nature of many, are represented as blemishes to the poem and to the poet. So they are. We know whence they sprang: we know, and we lament, that the breast of Dante was ulcerated by his wrongs and inflamed by his passions: but ulcers are ugly things to expose, particularly in the walks of poetry; and loud curses at all who pass by are but indifferent charms for healing them, even after copious applications from the pitch-pot. My critic would represent me as derogating from Dante. I hope he will understand me, when I tell him in my plainest mother-tongue, that although I do not find the glorious Ghibelline arm in arm with Milton, nor close to Homer, nor within sight of Shakespeare, yet Virgil seems to me a stripling by the side of him. Nevertheless I cannot help crying out, both in his Hell and in his Purgatory,

Quis me gelidis in vallibus Hæmi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbrâ!

Poetry should delight throughout, never weary, never disgust. Even pangs and sorrows are blessings from her hand, the visible hand of a true Divinity. The great poets we have brought together are all different, though Dante calls Virgil his master, as Virgil might have called Homer his. Everywhere in Homer there is plenty of bone and sinew, but flesh only in the right place. So much is not to be said of Virgil; and of Dante it is to be remarked that in many places his ill-covered tendons cut through his clothes, and we wish him better fare and a bath. But with what sentiments do we part from him? We embrace, and we will not be shaken off, the hard unpitying man who swooned at last with pity for Francesca.

'We doubt whether Petrarca, if tried on the whole count of his 'poetry and his doctrines in an Imaginary Conversation, would fare 'much better.'

Certainly not, if treated with rigour, or with strict justice. Petrarca had not in him the thousandth part of Dante's poetry;

and I was inclined to represent only that which is most amiable in his character. It is glorious to be the willing and disinterested friend of a glorious man, as Petrarca was of Boccaccio, at that time indeed less celebrated than himself, but surpassing in the variety of his invention all the writers that had existed in the world. He was more independent than Petrarca, he was more manly, he was more affectionate. Besides, he was poor, and he was abandoned by those who once had cherished him. Petrarca then, in the midst of those misfortunes, deserves my esteem for loving best the best man of his acquaintance. He was not exempt from vanity, or from its concomitant, selfishness: but, rather than exhibit him in his 'foibles,' I chose to bring him forward in his friendship, and in the company of the friend who most deserved it. In their conversation I was willing also to correct a false estimate of Latin authors. Boccaccio is not, as he appears to our critic, 'hypercritical' on Horace's verse, but correct and just. Our critic may have been taught at sixteen what, in less-confused and complicated language, I was taught at thirteen, that 'obliquo laborat lympha fugax trepidare rivo' *meant* 'to mark the sinuous and *reactive* flow of a river between curved and winding banks.' But why *laborat trepidare?* Trepidation is incompatible with effort, and labour is incompatible with fugacity.

'Whatsoever Mr. Landor does well, he does excellently . . . in his '*proper and peculiar path* he is second to no living writer.'

That is to say, Mr. Landor does excellently what pleases the taste of a man without a palate. We all do excellently just as much as coincides with the preconceived opinions of the most ignorant. What is the *proper and peculiar* 'path' in which he is second to no living writer? That, no doubt, in which a cripple on crutches can follow him. If my worthy man thinks of me as of one excellent in anything, decency ought to warn him of the difference between us; and, instead of such a flippant buz in my ear, even in flattery, he should approach with the slowness of humility, and the taciturnity of respect. Alas! it was on the fertile Egypt, and not on her neighbour the barren Arabia, that the seven plagues descended, of which the most odious were small creeping things.

'The following passage we give as a specimen of graceful com-
' position not unworthy to stand by *some* of the descriptions in the
' *Decameron*.'

There is nothing (except what is good) which is unworthy to stand by *some* of those descriptions. A writer by no means eulogistical acknowledged some years ago in the *Quarterly* that a story in the *Imaginary Conversations*, attributed by me to the person of Boccaccio, is better than Boccaccio could have written. I doubt the justice of the compliment. But my writings have long been at every author's discretion and disposal, as much as the letters of the alphabet, and few have taken any more trouble to utter a word of acknowledgment about it. They all are heartily welcome; and never did any man say with greater sincerity in the full force of the expression, Much good may it do them! Critics have about them a knot of friends and confederates, whom they think it their duty to exalt above all competitors. But why should warm-heartedness swell and degenerate into animosity? why should weaker men be pushed against me, when the shove must hurt them? A great Athenian of antiquity was required to give evidence before a court of justice in favour of a friend; which evidence, to be effectual, must have been false: he replied, 'I will go with my friend 'as far as the altar.' He would not forswear his conscience. Friendships are stronger now: we are not pagans.

## V. Visits and Visitors.

As long as Charles Armitage Brown remained in England, Landor visited him from time to time at his house near Plymouth: where, in 1837, he found him lecturing the neighbourhood on Keats and his treatment by the Reviews; and on Shakespeare and his Sonnets, and the probability of his having visited Italy; as well as otherwise busying himself in writing for newspapers. He does not seem to have made much impression with these lectures, until, with the view of proving that Shakespeare must have had ample means for visiting Italy, he undertook to show that at the age of forty-three the great poet was worth nearly seven thousand pounds: when a burst of glad applause, sudden as a pistol-shot, shook the lecture-hall. Brown mentioned this to Landor as

quite a good anecdote in the history of human nature, showing the delight of those west-country folk at the rewards bestowed, even in his lifetime, on the author of *Othello;* but Landor declared with his hearty laugh that it showed only how much better than a wilderness of *Othellos* they comprehended seven thousand pounds. The friends agreed however in most things: and Brown said to Landor, after one of his visits, that all his womankind who had seen him had fallen in love with him; that the daughters of his friend Colonel Hamilton Smith openly declared their craze; that it would have to be said of him, as of the other great Warwickshire poet, that no woman could safely go nigh him; and that for his own part he had not been happier when twenty years younger, and with Keats for his companion in that same western county, than Landor had made him in those late "white days" in their walks by the Laira and the Tamar. In the same letter (27th April 1838) he said he was coming to London shortly, like parson Adams with his sermons, to try and find a publisher for a volume about Shakespeare; and before that year the volume also was out, with dedication to Landor as the best lover of the poet and the best living writer of the English language. Two years later, family hopes took Brown to New Zealand; and not long after his arrival, in the streets of New Plymouth, one of the sudden fits to which he had become subject after leaving Italy, closed the life of this kindly original man, whose name cannot be forgotten as long as a reader remains for the most sorrowful story in our language,* the brief life and pitiable death of the author of *Endymion.*

* Milnes's *Life and Letters of Keats:* a book that one reads with the same miserable anguish of foolish impatience at the decrees of providence, with which such tragedies as *Romeo* and *Othello* are read.

All who remember Landor at this time will understand, if they have not shared, the delight his visits gave. Brown has only expressed what everyone felt. His fine presence, manly voice, and cordial smile, the amusing exaggerations of his speech, the irresistible contagion of his laugh, and the subtle charm of his genius diffused over all, made him quite irresistible. Nor was it possible to have him more at his best than under the hospitable roof of Kenyon, whether at Torquay, where he frequently went at this time, or in London, or in later years at Wimbledon or Cowes. Of this excellent man Southey wrote in 1827 that everybody liked him at first sight, and liked him better the longer he was known; that he had then himself known him three and twenty years; that he was of all his friends one of the very best and pleasantest; and that he reckoned as one of his whitest days the day he first fell in with him. Not without strong opinions himself, Kenyon had that about him which repelled no opinion whatever; and to this rare quality Southey hardly did justice on another occasion, when, rallying him on his regret at having no occupation, he told him he was far happier than if sitting on the bench all berobed and bewigged, or flitting like the bat in the fable between the two contending parties in the house of commons, not knowing to which he properly belonged. It was the fact of Kenyon's knowing well to which he belonged that gave peculiar charm to the catholicity of his tastes and tolerance; nor could his love of pleasure, or his frank confession of the pursuit of it, have other effect than to raise him in the respect of all who knew how much of this consisted in doing good and giving pleasure to others. It is material to add besides, that Kenyon had accomplishments of no ordinary kind, and could give

and take with the best who assembled at his table. He wrote manly English verse, was a fair scholar, a good critic of books and art, an observer on whom unusual opportunities of seeing much of the world had not been thrown away; and, in a familiar friendship with him of a quarter of a century, I never saw him use for mere personal display any one advantage he thus possessed. He was always thinking of others, always planning to get his own pleasure out of theirs; and Landor in this respect was an untiring satisfaction to him. He displayed his enjoyment so thoroughly. The laugh was encouraged till the room shook again; and, while Landor would defend to the death some indefensible position, assail with prodigious vigour an imaginary enemy, or blow himself and his adversary together into the air with the explosion of a joke, the radiant glee of Kenyon was a thing not to be forgotten. I have seen it shared at the same moment, in an equal degree, by Archdeacon Hare and Sir Robert Harry Inglis.

Another friend to whom regular visits were made at this time, who had married, during his absence in Italy, an old school-and-college companion's sister, remembered as long ago as her childhood during happy days at her father's house,* should not be omitted from my narrative. "Mr. Rosenhagen was of a Danish family," writes Mr. Robert Landor to me (19th May 1865), "and the son of a clergyman intimately connected, I "cannot tell how, with statesmen high in office and "influence about the time of Lord Chatham. One "son died young, but he had gained the rank of post-"captain in the navy. Our friend rose still more "rapidly in the Treasury, of which he became first "clerk; and was often mentioned in the house of com-

* See ante, i. pp. 26, 27, also p. 49.

" mons, though he never sat there. From the Treasury
" he was transferred as private secretary to Mr. Perce-
" val; and he was joined, after the battle of Waterloo,
" in the same commission with the Duke of Wellington
" and Lord Castlereagh to negotiate the peace at Paris.
" His part was especially financial, and he seems to
" have acquired the Duke's esteem in no common de-
" gree. But his attention to business almost entirely
" destroyed a sight which was always weak, and on his
" return to England he retired on a pension of twelve
" hundred a year; having married, as his second wife,
" the daughter of an old Worcestershire family con-
" nected with the Fortescues and Dormers, Miss Park-
" hurst, whose eldest brother was Walter's schoolfellow
" at Rugby, and went up to the same college at Ox-
" ford. Though they were very discordant, they were
" much together some years later, visiting each other's
" friends and travelling together; but with old Mr.
" Parkhurst, Walter was much the greater favourite,
" and he had been always very happy at Ripple, on the
" banks of the Severn. Many years had passed away
" from that time, during which there was no intercourse
" between the schoolfellows. My brother Henry had
" been often at Ripple, but until the marriage of Miss
" Parkhurst none of us had seen Mr. Rosenhagen. She
" reunited the two families while Walter was still at
" Florence. She and Mr. Rosenhagen had established
" themselves at Cheltenham, shortly before my removal
" to Birlingham thirty-six years ago. Till then I had not
" seen either of them; but, living then at the distance of
" only fourteen miles, every possible kindness was shown
" to me. My sisters and nieces were often their guests;
" and on Walter's arrival from Florence, when you be-
" came acquainted with him, he visited both me and

" them. Mr. Rosenhagen was almost blind and very " deaf, but a delightful companion nevertheless. There " was no danger of any disagreement between the high " tory and the black jacobin, between the high church- " man and the disbeliever in all churches, for they " eschewed controversy, and it would have been very " difficult indeed to irritate a man so courteous, so for- " bearing, and of such easy politeness. Besides a fine " person, he had much unassuming dignity, treating " with an impressive kindness, even as more than " friends and equals, such of his guests as he liked: and " he liked Walter greatly. My brother spoke of him " in his *Last Fruit* as the best and wisest man whom " he had ever known. I think that it was I who sug- " gested this character by saying that Walter may have " known some few men of equal ability, some few of " equal virtue, but I doubted whether he had seen one " man who equalled our friend in both. Very highly " and sincerely, on the other hand, did Mr. Rosen- " hagen value Walter's better qualities; and of the " worse he would neither speak nor hear. When quite " blind, he lost the best of wives, suddenly (1844). I " was with him a few days after her death. 'I have " 'lost, or am losing, all my senses,' he said, 'but all " 'amounted to very little indeed compared with this " 'loss.' It is now fifteen years since he died, leaving " me some very valuable books. He always believed " that the *Letters of Junius* were written by his father, " but felt no wish to prove the fact." Few names for praise and liking were oftener in Landor's mouth: and in the same year (1840) in which he wrote to me that the Fanny Parkhurst whom he remembered as an infant was become the providence of her husband, and that old Parkhurst and his son-in-law Rosenhagen were

the men who united most of virtue and most of politeness that he had ever met with, I find a letter from her, acknowledging the gift of his *Fra Rupert* and alluding to some lines in one of its scenes, in which she tells Landor that he had made the "blind but cheerful" old man very grateful for embalming a thought of his in verse so beautiful; that he had received no honour equal to this since the great Duke named him in his despatches; that he had directed her to place the three tragedies on the same shelf with Shakespeare and the Greek tragedians; and that he had long felt his adoption into the friendship of the Landor family as among the happiest consequences of his marriage.

Mention also should be made, among those with whom Landor had frequent intercourse in the earlier years after his return, of Mr. James, who at this time dedicated one of his romances to him, and to whom in Hampshire and on the Dorsetshire coast he made some joyous visits. The kind-hearted and not too vigorous novelist compared himself on such occasions to a still calm lake brushed by the wing of the whirlwind; and boundless was his enjoyment of the unaccustomed pleasure. "I "stagnate when I do not see you," is the cry of his letters, which promise Landor wild-flowers and wood-walks in Hampshire, with hills to ring back his joyous laugh, and, at Lyme Regis, cliffs that will remind him of Italy though of different colour. The joyous laugh attracted Thomas Moore too in these days, and he tells us in his *Diary* what a different sort of person Landor was from what he had expected to find him; that he had all the air and laugh of a hearty country gentleman, a *gros réjoui;* and that whereas his writings formerly had not given him a relish for the man, the man now had given him a relish for his writings. To another and finer

artist, dear to both of us alike, my old friend had also at this time to sit for a picture which I shall be pardoned for transferring to these pages, since it has added even to Landor's chances of being remembered hereafter. "We all conceived, before seeing him, a prepossession "in his favour; for there was a sterling quality in his "laugh, and in his vigorous healthy voice, and in the "roundness and fulness with which he uttered every "word he spoke, and in the very fury of his superla- "tives, which seemed to go off like blank cannons and "hurt nothing. But we were hardly prepared to have "it so confirmed by his appearance. . . . He was not "only a very handsome old gentleman, upright and "stalwart as he had been described to us, with a mas- "sive gray head, a fine composure of face when silent, "a figure that might have become corpulent but for "his being so continually in earnest that he gave it no "rest, and a chin that might have subsided into a "double-chin but for the vehement emphasis in which "it was constantly required to assist; but he was such "a true gentleman in his manner, so chivalrously po- "lite, his face was lighted up by a smile of so much "sweetness and tenderness, and it seemed so plain that "he had nothing to hide, but showed himself exactly "as he was, incapable of anything on a limited scale, "and firing away with those blank great guns because "he carried no small-arms whatever; that really I "could not help looking at him with equal pleasure "as he sat at dinner, whether he smilingly conversed, "or was led into some great volley of superlatives, or "threw up his head like a bloodhound, and gave out "that tremendous Ha! ha! ha!" The world did not make this pleasant acquaintance till some years later; but the Boythorn of *Bleak House* was the Landor of

this earlier time, from whose many attractive and original qualities our great master of fiction drew that new and delightful creature of his fancy. In the letter thanking me for my *Life of Cromwell* (April 1839) Landor had sent his first message to Dickens. "Tell "him he has drawn from me more tears and more "smiles than are remaining to me for all the rest of "the world, real or ideal." It cannot be always the Boythorn laugh, in the world either of fact or fancy; Landor in both had his ample share at all times of the tears as well as of the smiles; and neither few nor transient were the shadows that fell across his present enjoyments, as well in summer as winter days, from remembrances of Italy.

The change from Fiesole had of course tried him the most in winter. With amusing heat he wrote to me of one of his Bath Novembers: "We have had only four "hours of sun in six weeks; never since the creation "of the world has this happened before." And this had befallen him after a July which he had thus described to me: "I could not get salt-bathing quite so near at "hand as yours" (I was then at Brighton); "but I can "get a fine fresh bath, or even swim, every day before "my window. Never had we such continued rain. I "doubt whether there are any trout in the grand canal "before my house, but its ripples would tempt any "stranger to look over his collection of flies and try his "tackle." Nor was his trouble always from the climate merely, but sometimes from the ill-provision made against it. When Francis Hare came over to England the year before his death, and Landor visited him (January 1839) for the last time at Westwood-Way house in Berkshire, he described it as a house that would have done passably well for Naples, but better for Timbuctoo.

Everything around him but his friend's cheerful greeting was congealed; and into so enormous a bed was he put to sleep, such a frozen sea of sheets stretching out on every side of him, that for once he envied the bed of Procrustes. These were country inconveniences, and town-streets were worse. "In this weather," he wrote to me on another occasion (21st December 1840), "nobody can be quite well. I myself, an oddly mixt "metal with a pretty large portion of iron in it, am "sensible to the curse of climate. The chief reason is, "I cannot walk through the snow and slop. My body, "and my mind more especially, requires strong exercise. "Nothing can tire either, excepting dull people, and "they weary both at once. The snow fell in Italy at "the end of November, and the weather was severe "at Florence. Lately, from the want of sun and all "things cheerful, my saddened and wearied mind has "often roosted on the acacias and cypresses I planted. "Thoughts when they're weakest take the longest "flights, and tempt the wintery seas in darkest nights. "How is it that when I am a little melancholy my "words are apt to fall into verse? Joy has never such "an effect on me. In fact, we hardly speak when we "meet, and are at best but bowing acquaintance." It was always so when he thought of Fiesole.

A few months later, after many disappointments in that direction, he heard from Fiesole of a proposed visit to him, and at once eagerly went over to Paris to meet and bring back his second son; when occasion was taken there to show him some civilities that pleased him. "Imagine my surprise," he wrote to me (6th May 1841), "that any among the literary men knew even "of my existence. Nothing can exceed the attention "I receive from them. If their civilities are sufficient

" to make a place agreeable, I ought to be quite con-
" tented at Paris. Mignet has invited me this even-
" ing to a sitting of the Institut." Victor Cousin was in the chair, Mignet delivered the oration, and Thiers was among those who attended. It was soon after Darmes had fired at Louis Philippe; and Landor mentions his introduction to "Ledru the advocate," whom he describes as having undertaken the defence of the " wretched fools" who conspired against the king. He was also present at the trial in the house of peers, when he heard "the maddest of all mad regicides, and " surely the most impudent," make reply to the chancellor's question if he had any accomplices: "I tell you " again, sir, that when I fired at the Duke of Orleans " I was quite alone." He called afterwards on Ledru, with whom he found a client that interested him not a little, the celebrated Vidocq; "about sixty years of " age, wonderfully strong, and of a physiognomy mild " and intelligent: Ledru told me he was so, and very " trustworthy; having on a former occasion undertaken " his defence on condition of his giving a thousand " francs to the poor, when he performed his engage-
" ment honourably." Landor's interest was the greater in this new acquaintance from a parallel into which he had been led in one of his letters just before, on reading the Vidocq Memoirs, between "the great thief" the master and "the great thief-taker" the man: one of them frightening all the good, the other all the bad; one betraying all his employers, the other all his accomplices; one sacrificing the hopeful to ambition, the other the desperate to justice: a comparison or corollary to be as easily made in the seventh of a minute as in seven years, but requiring another century of honesty and wisdom for discovery of which was *best of the two.* The

whole race of moral swindlers and ring-droppers would have to be taken up first.

Beyond all others in the great city, however, one visit gave him the greatest satisfaction. Playfully replying to a remonstrance of kind Bath friends against the old hat he had taken with him on his journey, he thus mentioned this visit to Miss Rose Paynter. "Being "somewhat hot-headed, is not an old hat likely to fit "me better than a new one? I wish you had seen it "in all its glory. What think you of my talking with "a king and queen, and displaying it before them? "Such, in the most legitimate sense, are the Prince "and Princess Czartoryski, he having been proclaimed "King of Poland by the deputies of the nobility and "people. Knowing my devotion to royalty, but prob-"ably more attracted by my hat than by me, he con-"versed with me the greater part of the evening." On his return from Paris with his son, who, upon arrival in London, paid a promised visit to his aunts at Richmond, Landor passed some days with me, while the whigs were making their last unsuccessful resistance to Peel; and it was in my library, as he always afterwards said, he composed the shortest of all his Conversations. It was sent to Kenyon.* This was the time also, he would amusingly protest, when he failed in the only attempt he ever made on ministerial patronage. He had written to tell Lady Blessington that, now the tories were coming in and he was growing old, he should like the ap-

* *Landor.* Kenyon, I've written for your delectation
A short Imaginary Conversation.
*Kenyon.* Landor, I much rejoice at the report;
But only keep your promise—*be* it short.

FATHER AND CHILD.

*Father.* What, my boy, is the rhyme to whig?
*Child.* Can it, papa, be whirligig?

pointment of road-sweeper from Gore-house across to Hyde-park: nobody could dispute his claims, because he had in print avowed himself a conservative; he knew however there must be many names down, and he could wait; only she was to be particular in saying that the place he wanted was for *removing* dirt, or else there might be some mistake. The mistake must have occurred after all, he said, for the thing was not given to him.

He visited, before his return to Bath, the mother and sisters of his wife at Richmond. "I might have "expected some degree of shyness, at the least on her "mother's part. However, nothing of the kind. Nei- "ther she nor any one of her daughters was less cordial "with me than they had been formerly. Not a single "word on those matters which rendered my stay in "Italy quite impossible, and equally so my return to "the only habitation in which my heart ever delighted." "Excellent creatures!" he wrote to Kenyon. "They "received me with indescribable kindness, and gave me "a couple of dormice. These are great blessings." The reader will remember Mr. Boythorn's canary.

## VI. Death of Southey.

Southey's last letter to Landor was dated at the close of March 1839. It told his friend that the portrait of Savonarola which he had sent was safely lodged at Keswick; spoke of an epitaph for a proposed monument to Chatterton; and made another announcement, for which the proper place will shortly present itself. His wife Edith had died two years before, having been for many previous years dead to him; but, long as the event had been looked for, it fell heavily at last, and it

was to help in bringing back some shadow of his wonted cheerfulness that a little excursion had been projected in the autumn of 1838; when his old friends, Kenyon, Senhouse, and Crabbe Robinson, accompanied him and his son to Paris, through Normandy, Brittany, and a part of Louvaine. "We made a prosperous journey," wrote Kenyon to Landor; "good weather, good roads, "good temper throughout. We travelled five weeks, "did all we had intended, and reached Paris on the "day we proposed. The only drawback on our journey "was that Southey's spirits were not up to the mark, "except occasionally, when we passed through the coun- "try of Joan of Arc; and that, not having cultivated "catholic tastes,—pictures, statues, and streets have not "much charm for him. We separated at Paris, which "Southey declares he will never enter again, and which "I had hardly the heart to quit after a month's stay." Kenyon's letter closed with a whisper of an expected marriage of one of the travelling party, neither himself, nor Crabbe, nor Cuthbert, nor Senhouse; but it was not a thing to talk about till more assured. "Though "a very rational match, you heretic!"

The news being at first not a little startling to Landor, the same kind-hearted correspondent hastened to reconcile his thoughts to his friend. It was no foolish doting, he assured him, no probable or even possible intrusion of a second family among the first; but rather an act in its nature considerate to those around him. "I know no man so nobly and honourably help- "less as to all transactions of this world, all its butcher- "ings and bakings and bankings and fendings for him- "self (out of a library), as Southey; and his daughters, "I am sure, could never quit him if the consequence "were a solitary life for him. Alone, no man would

" be so pitiable; and altogether, if a man is to marry
" again, I should think this a wise match. Never
" suspecting that he would ever do such a thing how-
" ever, I asked him the other day whether he had ap-
" proved or disapproved the marriage of his uncle Hill,
" who took a wife at sixty. He said, *I approved it.*"
Kenyon added something as to the lady; naming her age, her frail health, and her unconquerable spirit. He had himself been able to judge of her courage and high-mindedness by a truly Spartan letter of hers which Southey had shown him many years ago. " It was in
" the time of the stack-burnings, and never was bitter
" contempt for what she esteemed a cowardly gene-
" ration of magistrates more strongly expressed than
" by Caroline Bowles. Southey told me too that in her
" district they had nominated her for constable, hoping
" that she would draw off. No such thing. She offered
" to serve, but they could not for shame swear-in a
" woman. Yet her writings (for, although you and I
" in our ignorance do not know her works, she is an
" authoress) are full of beauty, tenderness, and feminine
" feeling; as her life, I doubt not, has also been. She
" has for years been a great friend of Southey's, and he
" has rarely come south without paying her a visit."
The impression thus conveyed to Landor determined the course taken by him in some painful disputes that followed; and, sharing his high opinion of some friends of his friend to whom it placed him for a time in antagonism, I thought then, and think still, that he was right. Caroline Bowles deserved all that the good Kenyon says of her, and she forfeited none of her titles to admiration or esteem when she became Caroline Southey. In genius and character she was worthy to have inspired

an affection for which she sacrificed far more than it was possible she could ever receive.

Between the time of his return from abroad and the incident of his marriage, Southey wrote to a friend that he had heard of Landor during his last transit through London, and had seen at Kenyon's an excellent portrait of him by a young artist named Fisher. As a picture too he thought it not less good than as a likeness; though the same artist had also painted Kenyon, and made him exactly like the Duke of York. This Landor portrait became the property of Crabbe Robinson, by whom it was bequeathed to the National Portrait-Gallery; and characteristic as in some respects it is, nor undeserving of Southey's praise, its expression is too fiercely aggressive, and, as Landor himself used to say, its colour too like a dragon's belly, to be entirely agreeable or satisfactory. It certainly had more in it of the opening than of the closing lines of the little poem which Landor, during a visit at this time made to me, addressed to its painter.

"Conceal not Time's misdeeds, but on my brow
Retrace his mark:
Let the retiring hair be silvery now
That once was dark:
Eyes that reflected images too bright
Let clouds o'ercast,
And from the tablet be abolisht quite
The cheerful past.
Yet Care's deep lines should one from waken'd Mirth
Steal softly o'er,
Perhaps on me the fairest of the earth
May glance once more."

Not many days later, in March 1839, he received the letter written by Southey from the house of Caroline Bowles at Buckland, already adverted to, and for which Kenyon had prepared him. "Southey has written," he

said. "He tells me of his intended marriage: that he has "known the lady for twenty years; that there is a just "proportion between their ages; and that having but "one daughter single, and being obliged to leave her "frequently, she wants a friend and guide at home. "Nothing is more reasonable, nothing more considerate "and kind. Love has often made other wise men less "wise, and sometimes other good men less good: but "never Southey." The marriage followed within a few days; then, a brief interval before the return to Keswick; and then, the mournful close. Of the wisest of our human plans and designings the issues are not ours. The very day that joined newly-wedded wife and husband on the threshold of their Cumberland home, witnessed the close on earth of all that was happy in their loving intercourse. The tragedy is to be written in other words than mine.*

Come, friend! true friend! join hands with me, he said.
Join hand and heart for this life's latest stage,
And that to come unending. I engage,
God being gracious to me, as we tread
The dim descent, to be to thee instead
Of all thou leav'st for my sake! On our way,
If not with flowers and summer sunshine gay,
Soft light yet lingers, and the fadeless hue
Of the Green Holly. Be of courage! Come!
Thou shalt find friends, fear not: warm, loving, true,
All who love me.—He said, and to his home
Brought me. Then sank, a stricken man. . . . .

Before his consciousness departed, he had received and read Landor's last letter to him, assuring him of gratitude and affection unalterable. "God, who has

* The lines that follow are incomplete, but all that can here be used; and are only so used in compliance with the injunction of Landor, from whose handwriting, though not of his composition, I print them. The original, in the writer's own hand, had before been sent to me.

" bestowed on you so many blessings, and now the " greatest of all in that admirable woman who watches " over you like a guardian angel, will never let you be " forgotten even by the least worthy of your friends; " and will vouchsafe to you at last, I hope and trust, " such blessings as neither friendship nor health itself " is sufficient to afford. If any man living is ardent " in his wishes for your welfare, I am: whose few and " almost worthless merits your generous heart has " always overvalued, and whose infinite and great " faults it has been too ready to overlook. I will write " to you often, now I learn that I may do it inoffen- " sively; well remembering that among the names you " have exalted is WALTER LANDOR." But, for a little while, still the mind was to shine and be visible above the mists and dimness creeping over it. "My and your " dear friend," wrote Mrs. Southey, "thanks you for " your letter. But, alas! he no longer says, I will " write soon to Landor; for when I proposed to answer " in his stead, he said,—Yes, yes, do so, pray do. Lan- " dor has indeed a true regard for me." "You are " often with him still in spirit," she resumed after a few days; "his affectionate remembrance of you is un- " fading. The volume of poetry still oftenest in his " hand is *Gebir*. It *lived* upon the sofa with us all " last week; and he often exclaimed in delight, struck " as by a first reading with something that charmed " him, Why, what a poem this is! If at such times " you could see him, you would still see the glorious " mind all undimmed in those lustrous eyes of his. He " took up his *Book of the Church* to-day, and, turn- " ing its leaves over and over, looked up at me and " said, Well, thank God, I have written a book that " may do good to somebody." Not for long were even

such fitful glimpses of the fast-fading intelligence discernible; but for so long the recollection of his friend Walter Landor remained. "It is very seldom now," wrote Mrs. Southey on the 24th of December 1841, "that he ever names any person: but this morn-"ing, before he left his bed, I heard him repeating "softly to himself, *Landor, ay, Landor.*" For many months beyond that Christmas-eve, life remained, but without that which alone makes it precious; and it was not until the 22d of March 1843 Landor heard that at 8 o'clock on the previous morning his friend had passed away. On that day he wrote to me. "Southey's "death is announced to me this morning. My rever-"ence for his purity of soul, my grateful estimation of "his affection towards me, are not to be expressed in "words. But it would grieve me to think that any "other man should have testified to the world regret "at losing him, before I had done it." These lines accompanied the letter.

Not the last struggles of the Sun,
Precipitated from his golden throne,
Hold darkling mortals in sublime suspense;
But the calm exod of a man
Nearer, though high above, who ran
The race we run—now Heaven recalls him hence.

Thus, O thou pure of earthly taint!
Thus, O my Southey! poet, sage, and saint!
Thou, after saddest silence, art removed.
What voice in anguish can we raise?
Thee would we, need we, dare we, praise?
God now does that . . the God thy whole heart loved.

It only remains to mention the course and character of the efforts that followed to raise a fitting memorial of this famous man. With characteristic feeling he had himself desired a simple marble slab in Redcliffe-church,

bearing upon it his favourite Daniell's proud yet modest lines.

> "I know I shall be read among the rest
> So long as men speak English ; and so long
> As verse and virtue shall be in request,
> Or grace to honest industry belong."

But many difficulties were presented to this; and, in the end, a memorial was proposed that should take the form of a bust by Baily, with an inscription underneath, to which Landor at once sent twenty pounds and the inscription. The first was taken, but not the last;* which may therefore find a place here.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, BORN IN BRISTOL, OCTOBER 4, 1774;
DIED IN KESWICK, MARCH 21, 1843.

IN MAINTAINING THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIS COUNTRY
HE WAS CONSTANT, ZEALOUS, AND DISINTERESTED.
IN DOMESTIC LIFE HE WAS LOVING AND BELOVED.
HIS FRIENDSHIPS WERE FOR LIFE, AND LONGER.
IN CRITICISM, IN DIALOGUE, IN BIOGRAPHY, IN HISTORY,
HE WAS THE PUREST WRITER OF HIS AGE;
IN THALABA, KEHAMA, AND RODERICK, THE MOST INVENTIVE POET;
IN LIGHTER COMPOSITIONS THE MOST DIVERSIFIED.
RARELY HATH ANY AUTHOR BEEN SO EXEMPT
FROM THE MALADIES OF EMULATION;
RARELY ANY STUDIOUS MAN SO READY TO ASSIST THE STUDIOUS,
TO RAISE THEIR REPUTATION AND TO PROMOTE THEIR FORTUNES.

WONDER NOT THEN, O STRANGER, THAT OUR FELLOW-CITIZEN
HATH LEFT AMONG US THE RESOLUTION TO COMMEMORATE,
AND, UNDER THE SAME GOOD PROVIDENCE WHICH GUIDED HIM,
THE EARNEST WISH TO IMITATE HIS VIRTUES.

Other marble memorials there were too; but one less perishable remained to be erected, which led to

* "Whether it is placed under the bust," he wrote to the Bristol committee, "is a matter of indifference to me. . . . They who care so "little for the most illustrious of their townsmen would be worse "fools than they are if they cared for me. Inscriptionem civi optimo "meritam atque dignam cives ignavissimi abdendam censuerunt."

divisions among those who had most loved and been beloved by Southey. Perhaps there never existed, for a suitable and enduring as well as a delightful monument to the memory of a great author, such materials as in this case were afforded by his own letters; but, upon the question to whom they should be intrusted so much dispute arose, that the writer of the noble poem of *Philip van Artevelde*, whom all should have desired to select, and whom Southey during life had not only chosen to be his executor with his brother, but had singled out as the one man living of a younger generation whom he had taken into his heart of hearts, had no alternative but to impose silence on himself, and leave the task to others. Then was lost to us a book that might worthily have handed down to later generations a conspicuous example of some of the highest qualities that have adorned the profession of literature in England. No one more than Landor deplored this, though in the objections which mainly brought it about he had taken unavoidable part; and he had certainly no cause to regret that an opinion which he shared with the brother of Southey should have brought him also to the side of Southey's son-in-law, Mr. Wood Warter, the accomplished man by whose careful editorship of his father-in-law's unpublished writings a part at least of the literary debt due to his memory was very shortly to be discharged. To Southey's son was at last intrusted his father's "life and letters."

One of the letters, written upon *Marmion*, which had passed into the exclusive possession of Lockhart has been brought into prominence in the Life of Scott. Towards its close, says Lockhart, "immediately after mentioning a princely act of generosity, on the part of the "writer's friend Mr. Landor, to a brother poet, he has

" a noble sentence which I hope to be pardoned for " extracting, as equally applicable to his own character " and that of the man he was addressing. 'Great poets " 'have no envy. Little ones are full of it. I doubt " 'whether any man ever criticised a good poem ma- " 'liciously who had not written a bad one himself.'" The reference was to Jeffrey: but death is a great reconciler; and, in the letter which old Cottle had written to Landor while the subscription for the Bristol monument was in progress, after mentioning that the bishop of the diocese would give when he saw what others gave, that the dean meant politely to remit the cathedral charges, that Sir Robert Peel thought the concern too local but meant to subscribe, and that Lord Brougham was only too eager to do honour to his "old friend,"—he had taken pains to add that Lord Jeffrey, above all the rest, had behaved admirably. He had at once requested his name to be inserted for ten pounds, and had characterised Southey as one of the best writers and most amiable and estimable men of our generation: " I do not know," he also wrote at the time to another promoter of the subscription, "into whose keeping the " representative dignity of literature, and the jealous " care for its interests, are now to go."

Jeffrey there struck the right chord. Not more by the astonishing variety of the studies which were to him the business, exercise, and recreation of a long and blameless life, than by excellence of achievement in all, Southey was the representative man of letters of his day; and the subject to which Jeffrey refers, the position and the claims of writers by profession, had engaged his earliest thoughts, as it was among those that occupied his latest. One of the last to which he gave expression, for example, was his bitter dislike and contempt for that

sort of support which the Literary Fund bestowed upon such men, "relieving them like paupers, and waiting till "they become paupers before any relief is bestowed." One of his latest public appeals, in a like spirit, was to claim the only true help for the writer which consists in obtaining for him his own, by juster legislative arrangements as to copyright; and on the very eve of the refusal of the baronetcy which Peel would have bestowed upon himself, he declared that the State had no such efficient servants as men of genius, and none who had higher or better title to all its honours and rewards.

Two more subjects connected with his last years, hardly known in connection with him, but which many personal associations make memorable to me, will further show how strongly and steadily the fire that lighted his youth had survived to sustain and inspire his age. The social reforms which have endeared to the working millions of England the name of Lord Shaftesbury, were the subject of his last, almost daily, correspondence with Lord Ashley during the days of the agitation of political reform; and the last great book published in his lifetime, wherein he recognised at once the presence of a new literary potentate, was Carlyle's *French Revolution*. Never had he read a history, he declared, which interested him so much; and doubtless all the more because of the emotion which the tremendous course of events it describes had excited in him, when, in his own and Landor's youth, he read of them day by day. Not a few opinions, indeed, he found rising to the surface in that book to which he hardly knew what reception to give; but with wisdom and with feeling he found it to be full to overflowing, nor could he rest satisfied till he had seen and spoken with the author.

Let me not close without a brief record of some yet unpublished correspondence of this delightful letter-writer.

Mrs. Southey to Landor: 10th April 1844.

"I have had occasion lately, with a view to set at rest some uncertainty about a date, to venture on a task hardly less trying than the opening of a sepulchre. With a desperate hand I opened the receptacle of his letters—of our twenty years correspondence! wherein 'he being dead yet speaketh.' Once having plunged into it, there was no withdrawing; but neither is it a thing to talk of. My sole motive for thus naming it is, that having hit upon one passage (among many others) that I thought could not fail to touch and please you, I selected and will transcribe it for you. The letter from which I transcribe bears date Nov. 13, 1824.

'Landor has sent over another volume of *Conversations* to the
'press. Differing as I do from him in constitutional temper and in
'some serious opinions, he is yet of all men living the one with whom
'I feel the most entire and cordial sympathy of heart and mind.
'Were I a single man, I should think the pleasure of a week's abode
'with him cheaply purchased by a journey to Florence, though pil-
'grim-like the whole way were to be performed on foot.'

"If you survive me, dear Mr. Landor, you will probably see the whole of this precious series, in which (I do not fear to say it) there will be more of deep and touching interest, for all but the learned and political reader, than in any other portions of his correspondence. His sensitive nature could never have poured out its feelings so freely to any but a woman, and that woman one whom he esteemed enough to make her the companion of those latter days which he humbly hoped would have been bright with sunset glory."

In the same letter there is mention of a bust executed for Doctor Southey by Mr. Lough, which had deeply affected her; as it will, when seen, probably affect all to whom the living face was known. The soul is there; and, of the three marble faces which I have myself examined, in Crossthwaite-church by the same artist, and by others in Westminster-abbey and in Bristol-cathedral,

it seems to me incomparably the best. In Crossthwaite, Lough's full-length recumbent marble figure almost fills the little church it lies in; but I was more interested by the modest grave in the churchyard facing Skiddaw and Saddleback, with the Glaramara range behind forming a glorious belt round the lake. A worthy resting-place, I thought, for a great and good man. Nor less interesting to me was Wordsworth's grave at Grasmere which I visited later in the day, overshadowed by yews, and with the Rothay gushing past. And so they lie, two men whom true Englishmen should never cease to honour, by Derwent lake and Grasmere springs,

> Serene creators of immortal things,

now themselves immortal.

## VII. Last Series of Conversations, and some Letters.

The entire number of new Conversations added to the old during the twenty-one years now under description, written before Landor's return to Italy, and excluding only the five which belong to the last six years of his life, were thirty-nine; and the additional subjects may here be named. Eighteen belonged to the domain of modern foreign politics, and of these I will give little more than the titles. They were Bugeaud and an Arab chieftain on the eve of the marshal's massacre in Algeria;—Talleyrand at his last confession to the Archbishop of Paris;—the Queen of Tahiti, the English consul Pritchard, Louis Philippe's envoy de Mitrailles, and the French officers and sailors who were present when the envoy struck the Queen in the face;—Louis XVIII and Talleyrand conversing on the genius of Wellington, as to whom it is finely said that his loftiest lines of Torres

Vedras, which no enemy dared assail throughout their whole extent, were his firmness, his moderation, and his probity; that these placed him more opposite to Napoleon than he stood in the field of Waterloo; that no man so little beloved was ever so well obeyed; and that there was not a man in England of either party, citizen or soldier, who would not rather die than see him disgraced;—Thiers talking to Lamartine of the foreign policy of the House of Orleans;—Louis Philippe expounding to Guizot the moral of the Spanish marriages;—Antonelli and Gemeau conversing twice on the Occupation of Rome;—President Louis Napoleon characterising to M. de Molé the policy of his uncle;—King Carlo-Alberto discussing with the Duchess Belgioiso the prospects of Italy, and local jealousies in the way of unity;—Larochejaquelin receiving Béranger before the second Empire;—Garibaldi giving honour to Mazzini for the defence of Rome;—three dialogues of Nicholas and Nesselrode on the policy of the Crimean War;—the Archbishop of Florence sentencing for heresy the bible-reading family of Francesco Madiai;—and two final dialogues on the contentions of religion, contributed by Antonelli and Pio Nono, and by brothers Martin and Jack of the family of the Dean of St. Patrick. "Both parties," says Martin, "call themselves *catholic*, which neither is; "nor indeed, my dear Jack, is it desirable that either "should be. Every sect is a moral check on its neigh-"bour. Competition is as wholesome in religion as in "commerce. We must bid high for heaven; we must "surrender much, we must strive much, we must suffer "much; we must make way for others, in order that in "our turn we may succeed. There is but One Guide. "We know him by the gentleness of his voice, by the "serenity of his countenance, by the wounded in spirit

" who are clinging to his knees, by the children whom " he hath called to him, and by the disciples in whose " poverty he hath shared."

Of subjects more strictly biographical there were four. The speakers were, Eldon and his grandson Encombe, played off against each other with exquisite fooling; Wellington and Inglis after the Somnauth proclamation of Lord Ellenborough, where it is shown how small was the fear of Juggernaut coming down St. James's-street; Romilly* and Wilberforce talking of the Abolition of the Slave-trade; and Wyndham and Sheridan in discussion about the Irish Church, Sheridan maintaining that the only reform of her feasible was to abolish her bishops and endowments, sell the whole of her lands, and devote all the proceeds, in a just proportion between papal and protestant communicants, to the religious and moral education of the people. With these may be named the imaginary talk of two others of the most illustrious of Englishmen: Blake on his quarter-deck passing judgment on his delinquent brother Humphrey; and Oliver Cromwell with his Ironsides at his uncle Sir Oliver's in Hinchinbrook. On the old knight's noteworthy career perhaps a word is worth adding at Landor's suggestion. It did not close until Sir Oliver had reached his ninety-third year, and it had by that time covered a space which included all the men of great genius, excepting Chaucer and Roger Bacon, whom England

* Again let me show Landor's love for Romilly. "He went into " public life with temperate and healthy aspirations. Providence, " having blessed him with domestic peace, withheld him from poli- " tical animosities. He knew that the soundest fruits grow nearest " the ground, and he waited for the higher to fall into his bosom, " without an effort or a wish to seize on them. No man whosoever " in our parliamentary history has united, in more perfect accord- " ance and constancy, pure virtue and lofty wisdom."

up to this date had produced: not the Bacons and Shakespeares only, but the prodigious shoal that attended these leviathans through the intellectual deep. Raleigh, Spenser, Marlowe and all the dramatists of Elizabeth and James; Cromwell, Eliot, Milton, Selden, Hampden, and Pym; Hooker, Taylor, Barrow, and Newton; Hobbes, Sidney, Locke, and Shaftesbury; all had lived in some part or other of that single life.

The Italian subjects were four: Macchiavelli and Michael-Angelo on the suitability of Federal Republics for the government of Italy; Titian and Cornaro on the glories of Venetian art; Leonora, in her last confession to Father Panigarola, avowing her love for Tasso; Alfieri's experiences of English literature and manners, in a conversation with Metastasio of delightful wit and eloquence, which has elicited on a former page the admiration and sympathy of Carlyle; and Michael-Angelo and Vittoria Colonna on the poets and artists of elder and later Italy. Besides these, there were two brief prose poems on the affecting double marriage of Count Gleichem, and on the unrewarded services to humanity of the noble English soldier by whom infanticide in India was abolished: there were four, to be named below, in which Landor takes personal part, with Southey, Porson, and Julius Hare: and four Greek and Roman conversations completed the extraordinary catalogue. The speakers in these last were Menander and Epicurus, in two dialogues composed after the writer's eightieth year, and not unworthy of the exquisite Epicurus and Leontion to which they are the sequel; Epicurus and Metrodorus on the writers and the gods of Greece; and Asinius Pollio and Licinius Calvus on the heroes and histories of Rome. If to this list I were to add the subjects also of the dialogues written in verse by Landor, some already

named and more to be named hereafter, it would bring up the number of his compositions exclusively of this class to no less than one hundred and ninety; in their mere number wonderful, and in their variety as well as unity of treatment still more memorable.

Of the four to which Landor contributes notices of personal opinion I am now to speak; and first of that in which Southey and Porson are interlocutors. Landor's faith in Wordsworth had again been rudely shaken by his unyielding attitude in the Southey family dispute, and he had probably never felt less kindly to the great poet than during the final illness of their common friend. Hence therefore, taking him for the subject of a second dialogue between Porson and Southey which was to comprise what he thought of the later English poets, he is led to dwell less on the merits than on the defects of the author of the *Lyrical Ballads*. Even from Southey is drawn the admission of his friend's weakness for reciting his own poetry, which yet his friend himself might have forgiven for the exquisite truth of the description of it. "He delivers them "with such a summer murmur of fostering modulation "as would perfectly delight you." But he is not the more inclined to spare his critics. In this, as in the first Porson dialogue, the critics of poetry are sharply handled; and as true in its application now, as it was then, is what is said of their fashion of dandling their favourite for the time and never letting him off their knee, feeding him to bursting with their curds-and-whey, while any other "they warn off the premises, and will give him "neither a crust nor a crumb, until they hear he has "succeeded to a large estate in popularity, with plenty "of dependants." Against all that is thus grudging and ungenerous, there is eloquent protest; from which as

earnestly, but whether as truly may be doubted, Southey puts in a claim of exemption for genius itself which is at least in keeping with the speaker's character. "The "curse of quarrelsomeness, of hand against every man, "was inflicted on the children of the desert, not on "those who pastured their flocks on the fertile banks of "the Euphrates, or contemplated the heavens from the "elevated ranges of Chaldæa." Alas that experience should ever seem adverse to this! but it is only too certain that the large estate in popularity, long and wearily expected, does not therefore bring content to its inheritor; and that poets of the highest rank will not be found readier to do justice to others because they have had to wait long for justice to themselves.

There is much besides very truly said in this dialogue as to English poets of the second class. Delightful praise is given to Cowper; Byron and Scott are well discriminated, the last with a hearty cordiality; and, where the greater masters are incidentally named, language not inferior to their own arises to do them homage. "A great poet represents a great portion of the human "race. Nature delegated to Shakespeare the interests "and direction of the whole. To Milton was given a "smaller part, but with plenary power over it; and "such fervour and majesty of eloquence was bestowed "on him as on no other mortal in any age." At this point, by an easy suggestion of kindred topics, the talk is drawn off by Porson to Demosthenes in that natural way which is the charm of all the dialogues, and which relieves with the freedom of conversation their most elaborate passages. But when the greatness of the old Greek orator, as well as its limit, has been expressed after its kind, Southey has an illustration at hand to avouch the yet superior greatness of the English poet

and puritan. "Hercules killed robbers and ravishers "with his knotted club; he cleansed also royal stables "by turning whole rivers into them: Apollo, with no "labour or effort, overcame the Python; brought round "him, in the full accordance of harmony, all the Muses; "and illuminated with his sole splendour the universal "world." With one more passage I will quit this dialogue. It occurs where exaggerated and indiscriminating judgments of the classics are explained by the tendency of us all, more or less, to value things proportionally to the trouble they have given us in the acquisition; and it is shown that this remark has wider application.

"He who has accumulated by a laborious life more than a sufficiency for its wants and comforts, turns his attention to the matter gained, oftentimes without a speculation at the purposes to which he might apply it. The man who early in the day has overcome, by vigilance and restraint, the strong impulses of his blood toward intemperance, falls not into it after, but stands composed and complacent upon the cool clear eminence, and hears within himself, amid the calm he has created, the tuneful pæan of a godlike victory. Yet he loves the Virtue more because he fought for her than because she crowned him."

In the three other conversations wherein Landor, Southey, and Julius Hare were interlocutors, Milton continued to receive critical treatment of the most striking kind: all his works, and eminently his Latin poems, being laid under contribution for subjects and illustration, and readings frequently suggested that add unexpected beauties to even his noblest verse. An instance has been cited for admiration by De Quincey, at the line of the *Agonistes* which depicts Samson in his fall:

"Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
*Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill, with slaves;*"

where, by the comma which Landor would thrice repeat, Samson's agony is the more vividly presented to us, under blindness, inability of farther triumph over enemies, toil for bread, and association with slaves, in all the accumulated aggravation of its unendurable misery. "A rib of Shakespeare would have made a "Milton," says Landor in conclusion; "the same por-"tion of Milton, all poets born ever since."

The talk with Julius Hare reintroduces Wordsworth, from whom, often and often as Landor takes leave, he is but the more and more loath to depart; and happily only quits him at last with wise and reconciling words. He would have all respect, all reverence even, short of worship, paid him; speaks with delight of the series of enchanting idyls into which the *Excursion* would subdivide, with help of a judicious enclosure-act; places Virgil and Theocritus below him for everlasting freshness of description; and admits that no man has ever had such mastery over Nature in her profoundest relations to humanity. This includes more than Landor meant to concede, but is neither less nor more than true. It puts Wordsworth, where I believe his just place to be, above every other poet of his century. No effect comparable in its kind to that which his writings made and bequeathed, no such fruits of spiritual insight applicable not to his own time only, but to coming times and changes with which he would himself have had small sympathy, have attended those of any poet within living memory. The influence of his genius on his immediate contemporaries has been surpassed by its authority over their successors, whose ways of thought, not in poetry alone, have been mainly fashioned by his, and who seem but the precursors of other generations who will confirm and extend his sway.

Other views of Landor's as to books and men, which find expression in letters written at this date to me, may properly be inserted here. Wordsworth and other kindred subjects will reappear; and the reader will not judge hardly in them, or in similar detached sayings that may be given hereafter, such small contradictions or inconsistencies as are incident to the freedom of friendly correspondence. The animating spirit is always the same, and there is no mistaking Landor's voice in any.

On a Passage in Coleridge's Lay Sermon.

"I agree with you that few men in our days have written more eloquently than Coleridge: but to say things well is not enough for wisdom. He recommends (and in a sermon too) 'the ancient feeling of rank and ancestry as a counterbalance 'to the commercial spirit now prevalent.' Can anything be imagined more contrary to the spirit of Christianity, which all *Sermons* ought to inculcate on the Gospel only; or indeed more absurd in itself? For, how extremely small a number can possibly be actuated by 'the ancient feeling of rank and ancestry'! At the decease of Mr. William Pitt, who ferreted out from among bales and brokerages, rather than from iron chests and curled-up inventories, whatever, tarnisht or untarnisht, had a metallic odour and was heavy in the hand, there existed not in the whole English peerage twenty-five families of knightly dignity at the accession of the Tudors. Would Coleridge wish these new people to put on 'ancient feelings,' and to confound in their persons the very different predicaments of rank and ancestry?"

A Renegade.

"There is nothing in the man's life that should surprise us. Is it not only too usual that the career both of bar and parliament should be opened by petulant Sedition and closed by decorous Fraud? Barristers have at first a tinge of the tricolor, but at last rise with plethoric dignity from incendiaries into judges, and scowl heavily on the culprits they have excited and led astray."

Vulgar Mistakes.

"Coarse manners are oftentimes an effectual veil to worthless characters. Nothing is more commonly mistaken for man-

liness than brutality. They are upright who are unswayed by the affections; the sordid are the worthy; chatter is kindness; lowmindedness is condescension. The French are admirers of cruel princes, the English of clownish. We all have our sympathies."

A Judgment of Three Orators.

"I have often heard them, Grattan as well as Pitt and Fox; and, though I might otherwise be angry with him, I preferred always the plain-spokenness of Fox, even when hammering repetition upon repetition, to the sounding inanities of Pitt and the gaudy barbarism of Grattan."

Napoleon.

"I say that there is no example in history of a man who made so little of so much: there is no example of one who lost so many armies, alienated so many adherents, exasperated so many potentates, defrauded so many nations: there is no example of one who, capable of doing so extensive good, did preferably so extensive evil. He opened the floodgates he was employed to close; and through them heaved back again the stagnant waters, pestilential to all Europe, which had been excluded with so much labour."

Education.

"Education does not control or greatly modify the character. It brings out what lies within: *vim promovet insitam:* and that is nearly all it does."

Hazlitt.

"Hazlitt's books are delightful to read, pleasant always, often eloquent and affecting in the extreme. But I don't get much valuable criticism out of them. Coleridge was worth fifty of him in that respect. A point may be very sharp, and yet not go very deep; and the deficiency of penetrating may be the result of its fineness. A shoemaker whose shoes are always well polisht and always neatly cut out, but rarely fit, is not of much use to us."

Characteristic.

"Faults very often drop from us by thinking about them. I was remarking to a friend one day the common negligence of writing 'I never should *have* thought to *have* seen you here,'

when he smiled and showed me that I myself had done it in the *Examiner*. I thought I should have dropt at the shock!"

A lost Thought (8th Nov. 1843).

"It is hardly possible to recover a lost thought without breaking its wings in catching it. I got up in the middle of last night to fix one on paper, and fixed a rheumatism instead. Night is not the time for pinning a butterfly on a blank leaf."

Not to be read at once.

"There are admirable poems which demand relays. You cannot lay down Chaucer or Shakespeare. Spenser falls out of your hands in the midst of his enchantments. The longest of Wordsworth's poems I can get through without a relay is *Michael;* and there is not much in the old poets that we call the classic (since Ovid) which is worth this."

Faultless Writers.

"La Fontaine, Catullus, and Sophocles, are perhaps the writers who have fewest faults. Strange companions! But there are pages in Shakespeare and Milton worth all the works of all three."

Two-word Rhymes.

"How is it possible that so serious a writer as Miss Barrett should not perceive that the *two-word* rhyme is only fit for ludicrous subjects:

'These rhymes appear to me but very so-so,
And fit but for our Lady del Toboso.'

But we are so much in the habit of seeing the common law of the land in poetry infringed and violated, that nothing shocks us."

Invitation to Bath (1843).

"I have an antique ring, long prized in our family, which I want to put upon your finger. For this express purpose it has been newly set over the ancient gold, and here are the lines I have written for it. It is a *mask:*

Forster! though you never wore
Any kind of mask before,
Yet, by holy friendship! take
This, and wear it for my sake."

Prose running into Verse.

"While writing the Tancredi dialogue, I had the greatest

difficulty to prevent my prose running away with me.* Sundry verses indeed I could not keep down, nor could I afterwards break them into prose. Here is a specimen, not in the Conversation as it stands at present, which was written while I fancied I was writing prose :

> Can certain words pronounced by certain men
> Perform an incantation which shall hold
> Two hearts together to the end of time?
> If these were wanting, yet instead of these,
> There was my father's word, and there was God's."

### Property of Authors in their Writings.

"It seems to me that no property is so entirely and purely and religiously a man's own as what comes to him immediately from God, without intervention or participation. It is the eternal gift of an eternal being. No legislature has a right to confine its advantages, or to give them away to any person whatsoever, to the detriment of an author's heirs. To the rights of another

> 'His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono.'"

### The Elegy in a Country Churchyard.

"Gray's Elegy will be read as long as any work of Shakespeare, despite of its moping owl and the tin-kettle of an epitaph tied to its tail. It is the first poem that ever touched my heart, and it strikes it now just in the same place. Homer, Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, the four giants who lived before our last Deluge of poetry, have left the ivy growing on the churchyard wall."

### Southey's smaller Pieces.

"How delightful is the humour that runs through his smaller pieces! I am quite astonished at the *Gridiron*. It is the only modern piece that reminds me heartily of Aristophanes—that

* See ante, p. 396 and i. 264, &c. I could multiply such instances from his correspondence, light as well as grave, if it were worth the while. Here is one of the lighter sort from an invitation to me to visit him in Bath in the April of his 81st year. "What weather! Some demon seems to shuffle months together! March came for April, April comes for March. Here are two verses for you, with a rhyme to boot: no thanks to me, for I never intended it. And now, when *will* you come?"

admirable poet whose choruses have levity at one end with gravity at the other, like Apollo's arrow and indeed every arrow that can hit the mark. Are any poems of our time more animated or fanciful than the smaller pieces of Southey?

### Poetry in general (1843).

"I have rather a dislike to all poetry except the very highest; nearly all of it appears to me impure and false: strong expressions on subjects that cannot support them; the maculæ on the smaller stars that were above the horizon in Shakespeare's time. There is so much too that is incongruous, and I require the unmixed. Salt and sugar ought to be kept separate. Coffee should not taste of cheese, nor tea of mustard. Wordsworth has none of this bad housewifery; nor has Southey, in whose mind there are at least more mansions than in father Wordsworth's. Tennyson has too many summer-houses and pavilions for the extent of his grounds; but everything in them is pleasing and suitable. And what fine poems are such as his *Ulysses* and his *Godiva!*"

### The Prelude of Wordsworth.

"You have indeed given me a noble passage from Wordsworth's Prelude: *O si sic omnia scripsisset!* Higher it would be difficult to go. Here the wagoner's frock shows the coat of mail under it. Here is heart and soul. Here is the εἰκὼν βασιλική of poetry."

### Assailants of Genius.

"Such creatures as —— may pelt young Keats as he climbs the tree: but that Gray should be insensible to the fervour of Rousseau is quite astonishing, quite deplorable. I wonder how people dare to lie in the presence of such a train of detectives, reaching from their own doors to the very limits of space and time."

### A Shakespeare Celebration (1844).

"A herd of clownish Warwickshire squires of the purest breed, and in no county of England is the breed so pure, was resolved to celebrate Shakespeare's birthday at Stratford-upon-Avon. I was invited: I declined. I told them he was not only the greatest glory of their county but the greatest work of God's creation, but I should hardly testify my love and veneration by eating and drinking, and I had refused all such invitations when I might meet those who knew me, of whom in Warwickshire there is now scarcely one. I could not help doubting

whether any of the party ever read a single page of his writings; but I entertain no doubt whatever that if he were living and had come into the party, they would have butted him out. As the rocks that bound the sea are formed by the smallest and most inert insects, so celebrity seems to rise up from accretions equally vile and worthless. This idea has occurred to me many times before, and may perhaps be found in my writings; but never did it come forward with so luminous a stare as on the present occasion."

Byron and Wordsworth (Bath, 1845).

"A lady here, a friend of yours, has been lecturing me on my hostility to Wordsworth. In the course of our conversation I said what I turned into verse half an hour ago, on reaching home. No writer, I will again interpose before transcribing them, has praised Wordsworth more copiously or more warmly than I have done; and I said not a syllable against him until he disparaged his friend and greatest champion, Southey. You should be the last to blame me for holding the heads of my friends to be inviolable. Whoever touches a hair of them I devote *diis inferis*, *sed rite*. Here are the lines.

> Byron's sharp bark and Wordsworth's long-drawn wheese
> Issue alike from breasts that pant for ease.
> One caught the fever of the flowery marsh,
> The other's voice intemperate scorn made harsh.
> But each hath better parts: to One belong
> Staffs for the old and guide-posts for the young:
> The Other's store-room downcast eyes approve,
> Hung with bright feathers dropt from moulting Love."

Barry Cornwall (1840).

"Give the admirable Procter one [a copy of his *Andrea and Giovanna*]. What delightful poetry he writes! How fresh and sweet and pleasant the old-world flavour which he gives to modern life! Nobody writes with more purity. As to my own, *jam satis terris nivis*. I think it cold languid stuff for the most part beside his. I have read XXI. and XLIV. of his *Songs* six or seven times; and how beautiful XIII. V. LXXXII. CVIII.—in fact all of them!"

Robert Browning.

"You were right as to Browning. He has sent me some admirable things. I only wish he would atticise a little. Few of the Athenians had such a quarry on their property, but they constructed better roads for the conveyance of the material."

AGAIN: SOMEWHAT LATER (1845).

"I have written to Browning; a great poet, a very great poet indeed, as the world will have to agree with us in thinking. I am now deep in the *Soul's Tragedy*. The sudden close of *Luria* is very grand; but preceding it, I fear there is rather too much of argumentation and reflection. It is continued too long after the Moor has taken the poison. I may be wrong; but if it is so, you will see it and tell him. God grant he may live to be much greater than he is, high as he stands above most of the living: *latis humeris et toto vertice*. But now to the *Soul's Tragedy*, and so adieu till we meet at this very table."

*Luria* had been dedicated to Landor, who in later years, as will be seen hereafter, was to receive from its writer a graver service; and though the fame is now Mr. Browning's by rightful inheritance which but a few claimed for him when this letter was written, a tribute may be still matter of just pride to him which connects, with a man so remarkable as Landor, a wish so earnestly uttered, and a prediction so well fulfilled.

## VIII. A FRIEND NOT LITERARY, AND OTHER FRIENDS.

Every autumn, as long as the last of Landor's sisters lived, took him upon a visit to her in Warwick, at the house in which he was born; and the only drawback from his pleasure, on these as on all occasions when he quitted Bath, was his inability, through fear of accident or loss, to take with him a favourite companion, who may claim honourable mention in this history. "Daily," he wrote to me from Warwick in 1844, "do "I think of Bath and Pomero. I fancy him lying on "the narrow window-sill, and watching the good people "go to church. He has not yet made up his mind be- "tween the Anglican and Roman-catholic; but I hope "he will continue in the faith of his forefathers, if it will

"make him happier." This was a small white Pomeranian dog that had been sent to him from his Fiesolan villa the previous autumn; visiting by the way myself, to whom he had been consigned for safer delivery; and at first sight fairly dazzling me, as I well remember, by the eager brightness of his eye and the feathery whiteness of his coat, as he pushed his nose through the wicker-basket in which he had travelled the last stage of his journey. "Eighteen shillings for me, padrone," was the message sent me in Landor's next letter, informing me that already they were on speaking terms, and that I was to be reimbursed his fare from Florence. "He places his head between my knees to hear that "part of the letter which concerns him personally. He "barks terribly, and listens to no expostulation; but "replies that he is a young creature, and ought to "have his own way in consideration of it; finally, that "his grandpapa kept up barking till the advanced age "of seven." For many more years than seven the new friends were inseparable; and Landor's own figure, as it trudged up and down Bath streets, was not better known than his little bright-eyed companion's became. They were faces, both of them, that most people turned to look after; and Pomero certainly had the better coat. His master was quite conscious of this; and not long after his arrival told me, on sending me his "love and a bite," that the young rascal, not content with the advantage he already had, was always trying to make it greater. "He will have to pay at least half my tailor's bill, be-"sides the mending of my new silk-stockings. How-"ever, I do assure you he is well-born. I have been "making inquiries about it. There is not an older "family in Bologna. His ancestors preceded the Ben-"tivoglios, and were always stanch republicans."

"Pomero was on my knee," he says on another occasion to me, "when your letter came. He is now "looking out of the window; a sad male gossip, as I "often tell him. I dare not take him with me to "London. He would most certainly be stolen, and I "would rather lose Ipsley or Llanthony. The people "of the house love him like a child, and declare he is "as sensible as a Christian. He not only is as sen- "sible, but much more Christian than some of those "who have lately brought strife and contention into the "church. Everybody knows him, high and low, and "he makes me quite a celebrity." As time went on, his value to his master went far beyond Ipsley or Llanthony; for on a lady asking whether he was inclined to part with him, "No, madam," was his answer, "not "for a million of money!" "*Not for a million!*" she exclaimed; "whereupon I added, "that a million would "not make me at all happier, and that the loss of "Pomero would make me miserable for life." Nor perhaps will the reader object to another mention of this little hero at the house of one of his master's earliest heroines and dearest friends, as I saw her myself in Bath, looking nearly as young as her grandchild. "Pomero is sitting in a state of contemplation, with "his nose before the fire. He twinkles his ears and "his feathery tail at your salutation. He now licks "his lips and turns round, which means *Return mine.* "The easterly wind has an evident effect on his nerves. "Last evening I took him to hear Luisina de Sodre "play and sing. She is my friend the Countess de "Molandè's granddaughter, and daughter of de Sodre, "minister of Brazil to the Pope a few years ago. Po- "mero was deeply affected, and lay close to the pedal "on her gown, singing in a great variety of tones, not

" always in time. It is unfortunate that he always *will* " take a part where there is music, for he sings even " worse than I do."

As his companion in morning calls, Landor took his faithful little friend more frequently; and one of the residents in Bath, a clever as well as kindly observer, has described one of his morning visits as an event to the friend he visited. I have myself been present at them, and can confirm the description. The favourite subject of conversation would be rather politics than literature; and during all the time of the visit the little animal would be lying under his chair, with front paws stretched out, sharp face flattened on them, and small ears restlessly moving to catch any remotest signal that this wearisome morning call was over. The glad intimation would come quite unexpectedly, when, on hearing suddenly from Landor, in the very middle of some frantic outburst of wrath or some heresy of wild extravagance, a word or two of caressing Italian, out from his chair would dart Pomero, rushing and leaping into his master's lap, and barking madly in the ecstasy of his joy. "I shall never survive thee, carissimo," Landor thereupon would say; to which, as the other barked a like glad promise, he would add, "I do not intend to live " after him. If he dies, I shall take poison."*

These touches will suffice, though hardly a letter now came from him that did not name the small fond creature: but I may add, that whenever his more intimate friends visited Bath in his absence, they were ex-

* Mr. Spender, the author of the paper already referred to (i. 18), heard him say this, and adds, "Alas, it was Pomero who was " poisoned by some malignant rascal." This is a mistake. The little fellow died of old age; having outlived the natural term for so small a creature very nearly as long as his master outlived his.

pected to see and report of Pomero "*en pension;*" and as the reception given to Kenyon on one of these occasions was pretty much that which all of us had, a few words from Landor shall describe it. "Kenyon tells me he "saw Pomero at Bath, who turned his tail upon him; "proud as a county candidate toward his constituents "when he has just won his election. I shall reason with "him on this, and tell him that *he* ought to know bet- "ter, being somewhat more than country gentleman or "a knight of a shire." The picture would hardly be complete without the contrast of how his master was received. "At six last night," wrote Landor to me the morning after one of his summer absences from Bath, "I "arrived, and instantly visited Pomero *en pension.* His "joy at seeing me amounted to madness. His bark "was a scream of delight. He is now sitting on my "head, superintending all I write, and telling me to "give his love."

This kindly impression of my old friend will not be weakened by such brief notice as I can afford to give of his intercourse during these early Bath years with his oldest friend, his sister Elizabeth. There is a letter of his before me in which he describes the joy with which he had seen again the house that had been the principal home of his childhood, with its old mulberry-trees, its grand cedars, the chestnut wood with the church appearing through it, a cistus that she planted for him, and the fig-tree at the window on whose leaves soft rain was dropping as he wrote, and from which one little bird was chirping to tell another that there was shelter under them. "Turn away that branch—gently, gently! do not break "it, for the little bird sat there." Nothing was such pleasure to him always as to have the country in some form near, in shape of trees, plants, or flowers; and, through

three successive changes of lodging during his first thirteen years in Bath, he clung to the square in which he first lived mainly because of a plane-tree and a mountain ash in the garden of which he was extremely fond. When an accident happened to one of his sister's cedars he grieved as he would have done for some friend of his youth. "You tell me," he wrote to her, "it is broken "into splinters. Surely about the root there must be "some pieces large enough to make a little box of. "Pray keep them for me. Here is a man at Bath who "will contrive to form them into something which I "may keep in my bedroom." His sister had anticipated the wish: a writing-case of cedar, already put in hand for him, reached him on his next birthday: and I was witness to the delight with which he received it. He was seventy that day, and had risen at his usual hour of nine, though he had stayed at the subscription ball the previous night till close upon the third hour of morning. I rallied him on his dissipation, and warned him, even though Medea's caldron might still be boiling in Bath, that to give such advantage to the enemy might bring him down some day into the very middle of the brew. "I don't invite him," was his laughing reply; "but I shall receive him hospitably when he "comes."

In the same year (1845) he described to his sister his way of life. "I walk out in all weathers six miles a "day at the least; and I generally, unless I am engaged "in the evening, read from seven till twelve or one. I "sleep twenty minutes after dinner, and nearly four "hours at night, or rather in the morning. I rise at "nine, breakfast at ten, and dine at five. All winter "I have had some beautiful sweet daphnes and hya-"cinths in my windows." Inquiring in another letter

after her dahlias, which he fears the fogs will abolish, he tells her he never sees or hears the name without the recollection of a story told of a countryman of Sir Lucius O'Trigger, to whom a lady said, "Mr. Flanagan, "I am quite certain you are an admirer of dahlias!" "Why then, faith, madam," was his reply, "they ac- "cuse me very wrongfully. I know enough about 'em; "but sure, on my conscience, I have had mighty little "to say to 'em." The experience of Mr. Flanagan, like that of Sir Lucius, had been limited to Delias, which the Irish "pronounce the same." In another of his letters, this 1845 being the year of his brother Robert's publication of the *Fawn of Sertorius*, which, while everybody praised, nearly all persisted in throwing into the elder brother's lap, he had to tell his sister that he had declared "to a dozen of them at least" that he neither wrote it nor was capable of writing it, nor had seen a single page of it before it was in print. "Some block- "head," he added, "says it is what a certain celebrated "poet would have written if he wrote in prose. Now "though a goose or a turkey may be the better for hav- "ing the nerves and sinews drawn out of him, a poet "without them is none the more palatable or diges- "tible. Fifty such fellows are not worth the Fawn's "foot, and contain less juice and gelatine."

But having here anticipated somewhat, I go back for a few notices of earlier days. In 1841 he describes to his sister a visit to the rectory at Birlingham, of all places seen by him since his return to England that which had pleased him most; and where he had found their brother Robert the owner of fine pictures, and of grounds laid out with consummate taste, "living like "a prince-bishop." In the same year he tells her, as already he had told his brother, of the delight and won-

der with which he had read Robert's *Tragedies*,* protesting that, "in this century or the last," there had been nothing like the *Ferryman:* and he tells her, too, of the singular grief and low spirits he was in at losing his greatest friend in Bath, with whom he usually spent some hours of every day, General William Napier, just appointed governor of Guernsey. In another letter he expresses the wish that there should be a celebration of Robert's having reached his grand climacteric and got well into the sixties, by invitation from her to all the brothers, himself and Charles, Henry and Robert, to spend one more Christmas-day together. It could scarcely be so merry as several of the former ones had been, and perhaps the recollection of those might a little sadden them; but was not there something of sadness in all such days? Not at this latter part of life only, but at every other, he had himself been inclined most to melancholy on days of festival. "My birthday, as long "as I can remember, was a day of strange and unac- "countable emotion to me; and in all my pleasures "there has been more of softness than of serenity." But, enjoyment may be just as keen for being shaded with a touch of sadness; and I had too frequent and large a part in the grave glad pleasure of that day not to know that he was able to get out of it, even to the last of them enjoyed by us together, more mirth than melancholy. Acknowledging this letter, his sister gladly accepted its proposal, and in further hospitable greeting sent him (his favourite dish at her Warwick breakfasts) a dried salmon. "It has come," he replied, "in all its glory. At first I doubted whether it "might not be an alligator, from the size of it; and "I thought of opening my sash and calling a chair-

* Ante, p. 364.

" man to carry it to the Museum. But recollecting " what you had promised me in a former letter, I " staid my steps."

In the next year (1842) he sets her upon searching the old Warwick house for papers of his boyhood, remembered still. "Anciently there were some bits of " my Latin poetry and other such stuff in a chest of " drawers which stood in my bedroom, now a dressing- " room. Most of these were translations of Cowley into " Latin verse, and correcting his extravagance. This " is curious at so early an age, for I did it at about six- " teen." In the same letter he speaks pleasantly of the marriage of his niece Teresita Stopford to Lord Charles Beauclerc; tells of an expected visit of his daughter and second son from Fiesole; and bids her inform his brother Henry that he beats him in flowers, having to boast in that October month of a tube-rose five feet high. "I " have also a young kitten; but she mews eternally, " and tells me in plain language that old people and " young never do well together." The way for Pomero was prepared by this failure of the young kitten; in her place, after a very few months, the little hero was installed; and his sister heard as much of him in all the later years as I did. "Let me congratulate you," he wrote in the summer of 1844, "on the accident that " deprives you of your carriage-horses. Next to ser- " vants, horses are the greatest trouble in life. Dogs " are blessings, true blessings. Pomero, who sends his " love, is the comfort of my solitude and the delight of " my life. He is quite a public character here in Bath. " Everybody knows him and salutes him. He barks " aloud at all—familiarly, not fiercely. He takes equal " liberties with his fellow-creatures, if indeed dogs are " more his fellow-creatures than I am. I think it was

"Saint Francis de Sales who called birds and quadru-
"peds his sisters and brothers. Few saints have been
"so good-tempered, and not many so wise." And in the same kindly spirit to all dumb creatures he speaks in another letter of field-sports. "Let men do these
"things if they will. Perhaps there is no harm in it;
"perhaps it makes them no crueler than they would
"be otherwise. But it is hard to take away what we
"cannot give; and life is a pleasant thing, at least to
"birds. No doubt the young ones say tender things
"one to another, and even the old ones do not dream
"of death."

The reader will understand why I thus desire Landor to be judged as well by his gentler sayings in private intercourse as by his louder utterances in public. They in some sort explain each other, and certainly will help to each other's better understanding. "You do not
"know Landor," said Sir William Napier to a friend offended by his intemperate assaults on King Bomba or some other favourite aversion. "In matters of that
"sort he is reckless in expression only. What is sav-
"age in his speech does not spring from anything
"savage in his nature. Those wild cries of his at see-
"ing his fellow-creatures overridden by injustice or
"tyranny are but the sign of an honest human feel-
"ing and a deep compassion. He has the lion-heart
"that springs forward to tear the wrongdoer, and the
"chained lion's roar of fury when he finds that he can-
"not reach him. Yet, if he saw tyrannicide lifting the
"knife, I am well convinced he would rather himself
"receive the blow than let it fall on the man it was
"aimed at."

Upon such outbreaks, as generally upon his vehement contributions to matters of public controversy

which distinguished both his early and later years in Bath, I do not care to dwell, though I was chiefly myself responsible for giving them to the world. The Napier apology is undoubtedly worth much; but the evidence and the witness must be taken together, and the testimony is not without a flaw. Napier himself had a good deal in common with his friend, not alone of chivalrous spirit, disinterested aims, and a character incapable of meanness, but also of an arrogance of temper obscuring somewhat the splendour even of his achievements, a resentful impatience of difference of opinion, and a proneness to express with violence views recklessly formed. But having said this, there is nothing more to be said. A never-ceasing and quite unwearying hatred of oppression animated both; and whatever else was to be remarked of Landor's comments on passing events, the charge was not at any time to be made against him of siding with the strong against the weak, or of passing over the neglected and unregarded. Somebody at this time compared his weekly onslaughts on what he took to be scandals in church or state, to the growls of an ancient cynic worried by the sight of purple and fine linen; describing him as tame and civil before a beggar, nay, as even fawning on the tatters of adversity: and when that is nearly the worst that can be urged, it is hardly worth while to make an unpardonable sin of an ungovernable temper. I will only add, before quitting this subject, that he wrote frequently on the condition of Ireland, and for the most part with a gravity and impartiality into which faults of temper entered rarely. He remonstrated with O'Connell, when at the height of his repeal agitation, for wasting upon a design both foolish and impracticable powers that might have forced upon attention the true

and attainable remedies;* and to Mr. Thomas Davis, the creator and leader of the party which subsequently broke down O'Connell's influence, he addressed truths not less unpalatable. Davis had, in my judgment, qualities that would have made him incomparably the ablest politician produced by Ireland in our day; and his premature death, before what was crude and immature in his opinions had time to ripen, was a great calamity. A letter from him, found among Landor's papers, will be read with interest by very many who cherish his memory. The allusions to Father Mathew were elicited by Landor's excessive admiration for him. I am not sure that he did not think this reverend father to be the only true successor of the apostles living in our age.

* The beginning of O'Connell's reply, written from Derrynane, may still be read with a smile.

"You wrong me much in supposing that I do not know you. 'Not to know *you* were to bespeak myself unknown.' Little do you imagine how many persons besides myself have been delighted with the poetic imaginings which inspired these lines on one of the wonders of my infancy, the varying sounds emitted by marine shells,

> 'And they remember their august abodes,
> And murmur as the ocean murmurs there.'

Would that I had you here, to show you 'their august abode' in its most awful beauty! I could show you at noontide, when the stern south-wester had blown long and rudely, the mountain waves coming in from the illimitable ocean in majestic succession, expending their gigantic force, and throwing up stupendous masses of foam against the more gigantic and more stupendous mountain-cliffs that fence not only this my native spot, but form that eternal barrier which prevents the wild Atlantic from submerging the cultivated plains and high-steepled villages of proud Britain herself. Or, were you with me amidst the Alpine scenery that surrounds my humble abode, listening to the eternal roar of the mountain torrent as it bounds through the rocky defiles of my native glens, I would venture to tell you how I was born within the sound of the everlasting wave, and how my dreamy boyhood dwelt upon Imaginary Intercourse with those who are dead of yore, and fed its fond fancies upon the ancient and long-faded glories of that land which preserved literature and Christianity when the rest of now civilised Europe was shrouded in the darkness of godless ignorance."

"61 Baggot-street, 17th Dec. 1840.

"Sir, I have just received your kind note. When I sent you my pamphlet I wished (as I had an opportunity even in a trifle) to express my respect for one whose books I loved. I did not expect a reply, but as you were good-natured enough to send one, the least I can do is to thank you for it. We are glad of any intercourse with the parents of our friends, and your books were friends of mine and of those whom I most regard. I am glad to find you have hopes for Ireland. You have always had a good word and I am sure good wishes for her. If you knew Mr. Mathew, you would relish his simple and downright manners. He is joyous, friendly, and quite unassuming. To have taken away a degrading and impoverishing vice from the hearts and habits of three millions of people in a couple of years seems to justify any praise to Mr. Mathew, and also to justify much hope for this people. And suffer me to say that if you knew the difficulties under which the Irish struggle, and the danger from England and from the Irish oligarchy, you would not regret the power of the political leaders, or rather leader, here; you would forgive the exciting speeches, and perchance sympathise with the exertions of men who think that a domestic government can alone unite and animate all our people. Surely the *desire* of nationality is not ungenerous, nor is it strange in the Irish (looking to their history), nor, considering the population of Ireland and the nature and situation of their home, is the expectation of it very wild. I have taken the liberty of saying this because of the last sentence in your note. And now, praying your pardon for this intrusion on your time, for I know you will forgive the freedom of what I have said,

"I remain, sir, your most obedient servant,

"Thomas Davis.

"Walter S. Landor, Esq. Bath."

## IX. Reviews, Collected Works, Poemata et Inscriptiones, and Hellenics.

In August 1842 Robert Landor wrote to his brother that he had been reading with unusual satisfaction two reviews lately written by him, on Catullus and on Theo-

critus; and that besides the pleasure he had derived from the completeness and refinement of the criticism, they had given him a pleasure of another kind which he could hardly specify without implying something a little disrespectful. "They are as remarkable for their "candour and moderation as for other qualities of which "I felt more certain; and, in speaking of our own poets "now living, there is the same freedom from prejudice "as in your observations on those who have been dead "these two thousand years. Nor can I believe that "there is an idyl of Theocritus more tender or grace-"ful, or even more classical, than that of the Hama-"dryad. The conclusion appears to me more like the "sweetest parts of *Gebir* than anything you have written, "and much more delicate in its pathos than any other "person has written, since."

These essays, as well as a later one on Petrarch, were written at my request for a review which I then conducted, and they well deserve what is thus said of them. For two others, on Pindar and on Horace, he also at the time collected the materials, and it was to me a special regret that the latter was not written. For I had ventured to think the tone of his reply to the review of the *Pentameron*, printed on a former page, not wholly just to either Virgil or Horace; and upon both, but especially the last delightful writer, he threw out indications in the first of his essays that my suggestion had been considered. "One poet is not to be raised by casting "another under him. Catullus is made no richer by "an attempt to transfer to him what belongs to Horace, "nor Horace by what belongs to Catullus. Catullus "has greatly more than he; but he also has much, and "let him keep it." No injustice more gross is committed in criticism than when one writer is thus pitted

against another. The genius of Catullus you may think supreme, but that Horace is more of a favourite with greater numbers of people is a fact as little to be doubted. A critic, if unable otherwise to account for the fact, should consider this power to engage and delight many minds as no small merit in itself; if nothing else, as at least a proof that the master of it is in sympathy with the world. Some writers have a charm beyond the reach of criticism; sometimes perhaps opposed to its conclusions, and certainly often wanted by others of superior excellence. There are a hundred readers of Virgil and Horace to one of Catullus.

From letters written to me during the composition of the essays, some characteristic traits may be drawn. Catullus was the first subject chosen; and the necessary rendering of portions into English he found to be extremely difficult, glibly as the work has since been done by more hands than one.

ATTEMPTS TO TRANSLATE CATULLUS.

"I have attempted in vain to translate the extracts from Catullus. My version of the Description of Morning, of which the original verses, as mere verses, are the finest to be found anywhere out of Milton, is infamously bad. Pray correct mine thus, where the waves wakened by the zephyr are said to move

> Slowly and placidly, with gentle plash
> Against each other, and light laugh; but soon,
> The breezes freshening, rough and huge they swell,
> Afar refulgent in the crimson east.

But no man has ever been able to translate this writer, and no man ever will be. The lighter things are easy, and so are some of the graver; for Langhorne, I think, has given an admirable version of 'Miser, Catulle.' But though my Latin hendecasyllabic is better than the greater part of his, I could not in a lifetime write 'Quoi quam sit,' &c. nor could Robert Smith himself. Dryden, who makes Virgil, Lucretius, and Horace always more vigorous than they were, though he misses the softness and pathos, could never give the delicacy of 'Ac me,' nor

'Quoi,' &c. with its easy simple force. The three verses, again, 'Quæ tibi,' are three pearls, worth more than all the Billingsgate oysters and all their shells that were ever thrown into the Thames. Who ever wrote such a good thing of a fool as 'Ipse qui sit, utrum sit,' &c. Is it worth giving this version of the Odi et Amo?

I love and hate. Ah, never ask why so!
I hate and love; and that is all I know.
I see 'tis folly, but I feel 'tis woe."

Pindar he meant next to have tried, but to his surprise he found the language, after some years' abstinence, so unfamiliar as to render the undertaking too much of a task. He would always say he was never more than a boy in Greek, though he grew up to adolescence in Latin, and bore a strong beard in English. But even while he was complaining that he must learn the language over again, it came gradually back to him; and I remember well, when we next met, his likening that resumption of the reading of Greek to the sensation of entering a cathedral, where at first you find it dark, until use leads you on, and at last you become conscious of all the grand magnificence to which your eye dilates. After one day's reading he discarded his lexicon, and though he did not go on with Pindar he took up with another Greek favourite.

As to Pindar.

"The edition you have sent me I find to be edited with admirable learning. Who indeed can add anything to what such men as Heyne and Hermann have written? I happened to open your volume at p. 37. Ἴων ξανθαῖσι καὶ παμπορφύροις ἀκτῖσι seems rather the pansy than the gillyflower, which is nowhere παμπόρφυρον. The Greeks and modern Italians called several very different flowers by the names of ἴον and *viola*. In Tuscany the violet is called for distinction's sake *viola mammola*."

The result was the paper on Theocritus, as delightful a piece of writing as any that ever fell from him; and the day after the manuscript reached me I had this letter:

"At the account of the first idyl where the herd offers Thyrsis his most magnificent goat for a song, insert this:

'We often hear that such or such a thing is not worth an old 'song. Alas, how few things are! What precious recollections do 'some of them awaken! what pleasurable tears do they excite! Not 'only do they purify the stream of life, but they can delay it on its 'shelves and rapids, they can turn it back again to the soft moss 'amidst which its sources issue.'

I have been trying a version of the famous lines in that idyl, so weakly imitated by Virgil, so beautifully by Milton, which yet does not please me. Fine as are the verses of Theocritus, the Greek language itself cannot bear him above Milton in his *Lycidas*.

> Where were ye, O ye nymphs, when Daphnis died?
> For not on Pindus were ye, nor beside
> Penëus in his softer glades, nor where
> Acis might well expect you, once your care.
> But neither Acis did your steps detain,
> Nor strong Anapus rushing forth amain,
> Nor high-brow'd Etna with her forest chain.

I shall also add what I think is somewhat of an idyl; but you will judge. I took the idea from a note in your Pindar. I had forgotten the story."

The story was the Hamadryad; and at no period of his life had he written a short poem in feeling belonging more intensely to the antique world, in the spirit of it more youthful, or of a more enchanting grace and delicacy of expression, than this in his seventieth year. Its subject is a wood-nymph's love for a young forester who has forborne to fell the oak that is her home: and what a poet who was less of a Greek would have turned into sentiment or allegory, is made to interest us here by an absolute simplicity and reality. The time of light, clear, definite sensation; when, to every man, the shapes of nature were but the reflection of his own; when marvels were not explained but believed, and the supernatural was not higher than the natural, or indeed

other than a different development of the attributes and powers of nature; is reflected in every line. Not human, yet not above humanity, the fairy doubts if her lover will be constant; perplexed between her natural heart and her shadowy non-natural ways, the mortal has his doubts as well; and, in the way we thus become conscious alike of the pains and pleasures, the enjoyments and the misgivings, of such unequal intercourse, there is a wonderful fascination. A bee is always sent to him when she specially desires his presence: in long summer days, and longer winter nights, still sent forth by her,

> "To bring that light which never wintery blast
> Blows out, nor rain nor snow extinguishes,
> The light that shines from loving eyes upon
> Eyes that love back till they can see no more:"

and he has engaged himself never to own that he has tired of her, if ever such a calamity should befall. He is only to drive the bee away. "Then shall I know my "fate, and, for thou must be wretched, weep at thine." Nor does he really in any heartless fashion tire or cease to be fond of her. But he is a mortal, not a dryad; and, mortal habits resuming their control, it happens one day that, annoyed by a little insect too importunately buzzing in his ear at an inconvenient time, he lifts his hand impatiently, and in the same moment breaks the wing of a bee and the heart of the hamadryad. Landor liked his idyl so much that it may be worth adding a characteristic correction of it sent me not long before his death, in which he removed a bit of sentiment, a reflection, from it.

"Whenever you revise my poems do not forget to strike out two verses from my *Hamadryad*, which ought to have been omitted by me. The verses I mean are in the dialogue where first she prays of Rhaicos to spare her oak, complains of him

and his father slaying the innocent trees, and to his inquiry whether her flock is anywhere near, replies :

> I have no flock ; I kill
> Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that feels the air,
> The sun, the dew. Why should the beautiful
> (And thou art beautiful) disturb the source
> Whence springs all beauty? Hast thou never heard
> Of hamadryads ?

Now these are obscure ; I had corrected them to

> Whence springs all beauty . . Life. Hast thou not heard, &c.

But I afterwards thought that the hamadryad should have cut across this little piece of reflection, and should have said :

> I have no flock ; I kill
> Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that feels the air,
> The sun, the dew. Thou never, then, hast heard
> Of hamadryad."

The third of these criticisms, all of them written with more care than he ordinarily bestowed on matters of the kind, had for its subject *Petrarca ;* and it is curious that precisely the remark made by his brother Robert of the *Catullus* was made to him of this by Carlyle. "That piece on Petrarca," he said, "surprises me "(I beg many pardons) by its *impartiality* to that weari- "some creature ; and looks, in my mind, like a perfect "steel engraving in the way of portraiture." The biographical portion is indeed a little masterpiece ; and I cannot refrain from showing, by a few brief touches, how delicate are the strokes of the narrative. Of the proneness of tender hearts to be moulded by localities, he says, that perhaps the purity and singleness of Petrarca's, his communion with it on one only altar, his exclusion of all images but one, may have resulted from his long visit in boyhood to the gushing springs, the eddying torrents, the insurmountable rocks, the profound and inviolate solitudes of Vaucluse. Of Laura's coldness, he remarks that it is well perhaps for those who delight in poetry that she should have been inflexible

and obdurate, "for the sweetest song ceases when the "feathers have lined the nest." The danger of all "magical powers" to the possessor of them he illustrates by a fatal attribute in the "magic of the poet," that while he can always at will call before him the object of his wishes, her countenance and her words remain beyond his influence. Not sparing in his quiet illustrations of Petrarca's vanity, he yet repels the conceit ascribed to him in playing so often on the name of Laura: holding it to be a pardonable pleasure to cherish the very sound of what we love, for that, belonging as it does to the heart, it belongs to poetry, and is not to be cast aside. Of the poet's coronation it is remarked that no man can be made greater than another, although he may be made more conspicuous by title, dress, position, and acclamation; for the powerful can be but ushers to the truly great, "and only in the execution "of this office they themselves approach to greatness." Petrarca's constancy while his mistress advanced in years, is expressed by the saying that Youth has swifter wings than Love. "He had loved her sixteen years; "but all the beauty that had left her features had set-"tled on his heart; immovable, unchangeable, eternal." It is nevertheless as truly said, that when his love administered nothing to his celebrity it was silent; that there is a singular absence from his verses of all sympathy with Laura's personal griefs; that he thought more about her eyes than about those tears which are the inheritance of the brightest; and that he might well be supposed to have said, in some unedited canzone, "What care I what tears there be, If the tears are not "for me?" The conclusion altogether is that Petrarch was the very best man that ever was a very vain one, while in him vanity had a better excuse for itself than in

any other, since none was ever more admired by the world; and that, though Laura was sensible of little or no passion for him, she was pleased with his, and stood like a beautiful caryatid of stainless marble at the base of an image on which the eyes of Italy were fixed. "He "who has loved truly, and above all, he who has loved "unhappily, approaches, as holiest altars are approached, "the cenotaph on the little column at Arquà."

The letter accompanying this essay, when sent to me, told me of the progress of another and more important literary labour also undertaken at my suggestion, and to which I gave such help as he invited from me during the next following years. This was the Collection and Revision of all his Writings; a part of the design of which was that it should be completed with the completion of his seventieth year. But, by the labour involved in the preparation of it, a delay of more than six months after he had seen his seventy-first having intervened, he laughingly declared that this had freed him from a certain other resolution he would else have kept. "I have youth on my side," he wrote to Lady Blessington in November 1844:

"I shall not see seventy for nearly three months to come. Once beyond seventy I will never write a line in verse or prose for publication. I will be my own Gil Blas. The wisest of us are unconscious when our faculties begin to decay. Knowing this, I fixed my determination many years ago. Meanwhile I am acting religiously on F.'s advice. I pluck out my weeds all over the field, and leave only the strongest shoots of the best plants standing."

To me he wrote in another letter a few weeks later.

"I am working very hard at the Collection, and will be mindful of your warnings. Old men are apt to stumble and fall flat when they totter into poetry. We all are archbishops at a certain age; but some can bear Gil Blas better than the others can. Yet I hope you will not have to repent of your

wish to draw the world's attention to my grave. People will not read my writings until then; and then, if they like to do so, they may perhaps find, both in prose and poetry, what may enlarge their minds and correct their taste; and here I speak of those whose minds are already the largest, and whose taste is the most correct. There are some seeds that will germinate in gravel; but there are none of that species in my sack. I will scatter none on the road-side. Throw me open the garden, and I will try to do something for the well-ordered and clean *parterre*. Allow me one French word; you shall never have another from me: *border* would not do, nor *bed*. Cicero and Atticus blow a few Greek bubbles across to one another. . . not that I am to be swayed by the authority of either; but when I acknowledge a fault I hope for pardon. I began with self, and will end with self, as most men do. The literary world is a dram-drinking world at present; but it is quite possible that the next generation will relish a cooler and better-flavoured drink. My Conversations, whatever their demerits, will exhibit more qualities and postures of the human mind than any other book published in my day. Above two hundred men and women will live again; and, among the rest, neither Cicero nor Solon will be proved to have spoken more eloquently or more wisely in his former state. *Nec meus hic sermo est.* But of my poetry what shall I say? In fact I care little about it, though I have always been nursing it assiduously. I go on correcting and correcting, adding and adding, all my life through, and nobody (as might be expected) is less satisfied at last. Will this answer do for our friend, and is it worth retaining?

Yes; I write verses now and then,
But blunt and flaccid is my pen,
No longer talkt of by young men
As rather clever.

In the last quarter are my eyes,
You see it by their form and size;
Is it not time then to be wise?
Or now or never.

Fairest that ever sprang from Eve!
While Time allows the short reprieve,
Just look at me! would you believe
'Twas once a lover?

I can not clear the five-bar gate;
But, trying first its timber's state,
Climb stiffly up, take breath, and wait
To trundle over.

Thro' gallopade I can not swing
The entangling blooms of Beauty's spring:
I can not say the tender thing,
Be't true or false;

And am beginning to opine
Those girls are only half-divine
Whose waists yon wicked boys entwine
In giddy waltz.

I fear that arm above that shoulder;
I wish them wiser, graver, older,
Sedater, and no harm if colder
And panting less.

Ah! people were not half so wild
In former days, when, starchly mild,
Upon her high-heel'd Essex smiled
The brave Queen Bess."

Hardly any letter now reached me from him without a verse in it of some kind, grave or gay, to add to our Collection; thrown off with as much ease as if it were but ordinary speech, and seeming to prove beyond question that if he had only given to his poetry the same kind and amount of care bestowed upon his prose, he might in both have had few superiors. Among the verses that thus came to me, struck out amid the wearisome correction of proofs, were some that rank with his best in their kind. The Cymodameia, a charming Greek legend of two lovers who obtain by their fidelity the favour of Apollo, is one of them; and several smaller pieces that owed their inspiration to the before-named lady of the Aylmer family, who, both by her accomplishments and by her name of Rose, had brought back to him a dream of his youth, expressed delightfully his gratitude for the happiness her society had given him. From a letter to this lady dated a few weeks subsequent to the publication of the Collected Works, in which he had written of a harvest-scene witnessed with Kenyon (or rather with "all that is left of Kenyon—scarcely "three quintals: a mule now could carry him up-hill"), I take a few words which express much. "Between "the hay-harvest and the corn-harvest there is a lull "of nature, a calm and somewhat dull quiescence. "Autumn then comes to tell us of the world's varieties "and changes. At last the white pall of nature closes "round us. In the last seven or eight years I seem to "myself to have passed through all the seasons of life "excepting the very earliest and the very latest. I "doubt whether I have ever been so happy in any "other equal and continued space of time. Italy would "sometimes flash back upon me; but the lightnings "only kept the memory awake, without disturbing it.

"How much, how nearly all, of this contentment do "I owe to your friendship, to your music and your "conversation!" (To Lady Sawle, 6th July 1846.) To the same friend were addressed the lines "To a Bride" which stand last but one in the collection; with the date of the day, "17th Feb. 1846," on which she had changed her name.

Something also of a biographical interest may be found hereafter in other personal poems clustering thick at the close of the book, which were mostly written while it passed through the printer's hands. Among these were the lines to his daughter Julia, to his niece Teresita Stopford, to Charles Dickens, to Robert Browning, to John Kenyon, and to Julius Hare; the latter name and my own standing together on the dedicatory page of the first volume, and on the final page of the second a poem to myself concluding the work, which reached me so late that the final sheet had to be cancelled to admit of its insertion. I hope to be forgiven for preserving it here, with the letter in which it came. Some allusions in it are to be explained by the fact that, as the person to whom he addressed it, and who had, by way of a good-humoured Landorian imitation, just sent him some congratulatory verses on the completion of their joint labour in editing, was in those days an Edinburgh Reviewer, the writer not unreasonably expected for his now gathered and completed works a little praise from that cold quarter to set against less genial talk in former years.

"As the volumes begin they must end with you. *A te principium, tibi desinet.* These verses must be added; and here are two or three words to enrich the index: red-poll'd, siller-grasping (siller, Scotch for silver). Now, these I think must be my very last; for would it not be a scandal, my dear Forster, that a

man in his seventy-second year should be running with his tongue out after the Muses?

> FORSTER! whose zeal hath seiz'd each written page
> That fell from me, and over many lands
> Hath clear'd for me a broad and solid way,
> Whence one more age, ay, haply more than one,
> May be arrived at (all through thee), accept
> No false or faint or perishable thanks.
> From better men, and greater, friendship turn'd
> Thy willing steps to me. From ELIOT'S cell
> Death-dark; from HAMPDEN'S sadder battle-field;
> From steadfast CROMWELL'S tribunitian throne,
> Loftier than king's supported knees could mount;
> Hast thou departed with me, and hast climbed
> Cecropian heights, and ploughed Ægean waves.
> Therefore it never grieved me when I saw
> That she who guards those regions and those seas
> Hath lookt with eyes more gracious upon thee.
> There are no few like that conspirator
> Who, under prétext of power-worship, fell
> At CÆSAR'S feet, only to hold him down
> While others stabb'd him with repeated blows:
> And there are more who fling light jibes, immerst
> In gutter-filth, against the car that mounts
> Weighty with triumph up the Sacred Way.
> Protect in every place my stranger guests,
> Born in the lucid land of free pure song,
> Now first appearing on repulsive shores,
> Bleak, and where safely none but natives move,
> Red-poll'd, red-handed, siller-grasping men.
> Ah! lead them far away, for they are used
> To genial climes and gentle speech; but most
> CYMODAMEIA: warn the Tritons off
> While she ascends, while through the opening plain
> Of the green sea (brighten'd by bearing it)
> Gushes redundantly her golden hair.

The lines, I think, will conclude the book becomingly and ornamentally, and help us hand in hand down to future generations. The men of our commonwealth indeed will never permit us to be separated, if only you remain faithful to their fields and pastures. But take care, take care you do not make me as jealous of you in poetry as I have often been in prose. Do not let me catch you again among

> Those trackless forest glades, those noble hills,
> And those enchanting but sequestered valleys
> Which broad-browed Landor rules as his domain.

And now come and make your peace for having invaded that country."

Other invasions into his territory there also were, incident to the help I gave in preparation of the volumes, out of which arose conflicts that ended sometimes doubtfully, but always peacefully. Against his intended reformation of spelling I waged a successful war. If the language was ever in that respect to be amended, it seemed to me that it must be done by a great work designed for no other purpose, and that what Johnson had seen to be impracticable was not likely now to succeed. Books had multiplied too much; the literature had become too extensive for change; even Shakespeare and his successors had submitted to the strength of custom; and any attempt to resist such determination of the language could only avail to distract the reader's attention and vex him in vain. Right or wrong, habit was too strong for us, and there was nothing left us but to abide by that which was least likely to vary more. To this argument he yielded at last, reserving only a few words defensible on Milton's authority. But upon another point I was not so fortunate. I would fain have omitted nearly all the political dialogues, and shortened some of the others; sufficient for another man's reputation, it might be, but adding nothing to his; for I would have had no alloy, even of silver, where there was so much pure gold. Here however he was not to be moved. If I dismiss my Ferdinands and Don John Marys, he would say, the book ceases to represent all the parts of life which I proposed to exhibit in it. "You " say that where conversations begin with heroes and

"continue with men, it is a violation of the rules of art "that they should terminate with something lower. "But that is exactly what I intended." He had also another argument.

"The volumes belong to you and Hare, without whom they could never have appeared, and I shall omit all the old dedications,—for Mina gave orders to kill a woman; Bolivar was a coxcomb and impostor, having been two hundred miles distant from the battle he pretended to have won; and Wilson is worse than a whig. But you failed to convince me (and who, then, shall succeed in persuading me?) that I ought to cancel a single one of the Conversations. Lord Dudley told Hare that out of ninety there were not nine which any other man in England could have written. And he spoke the truth. There is a particle of salt in the very poorest of them which will preserve it from decomposition. Beside, this is to be considered, which nobody has considered sufficiently. If Shakespeare had written but *Othello*, the noblest of human works, he would scarcely have been half so great as the having written many dramas in addition, even inferior ones, has made him. Genius shows its power by its multiformity. After the great poet had written half his plays, the writing of the other half would make him not merely one half greater, but three hundredfold. This is because he has brought into activity so many powers of mind, and because there are so many systems all shining in their greater or their lesser spheres, throughout his vast creation."

Of the book thus given to the world it will not need that I should add anything to what already has been said of the several parts composing it. Its reception by the public was very favourable, and it had private greetings of unusual warmth. It was hailed as a double gift, to the age and to after ages, by some whose good word Landor reckoned to be fame; and perhaps he would himself have singled out, as the most welcome to him of all, the praise of William Napier. He wrote more than once, as he made his way through the volumes, in language of unfeigned astonishment. "You

" have two or three crotchets which you know I laugh " at, though I never dispute with you on them; and " which I believe you laugh at yourself in your sleeve, " though it is a large sleeve that would hold your laugh. " However, there they are, and they belong to you, in " the same manner that Cromwell's wart belonged to " him, and he would be a fine fool that judged Oliver's " genius by his wart! I do declare, notwithstanding " your Napoleon wart, that your work is marvellous." Again he wrote: "When I consider that the whole of " these volumes is original, the pure production of your " inventive brain, it is astounding. The variety and " purity of your language, the vigour and wit of your " thoughts, the extent of the ground you travel over, " are all causes of amazement." A third letter, in which he wrote of the Conversations more exclusively, was very characteristic of himself as well as of Landor. "I know not what the temper of the different " people, made eloquent by you, may have been, and " therefore I know not if they would have listened to " you; but they must all have had, in a greater or " less degree, genius, and wit in the high significance " of that word, and therefore I suppose would have be- " stowed an hour or two on you; and if so, you have " shown that you could have talked well and wittily to " the greatest men and women of every nation and of " every age, since history took the place of fable, and " perhaps better when fable *was* history. To the women " you certainly could, you cunning knave, for you have " adorned them with all the graces that poetry, the " best and finest of fables, could invent. And yet you " have borrowed nothing from former poets; unless it " be the Olympus-shaking laugh of Homer's Jupiter, " and that you keep for yourself. I would you could

"throw his lightnings also! I know where they would "fall, and the world would soon be purged of all knaves "and sneaking scoundrels."

The great soldier had perfectly understood what it was that formed the greatness as well as the charm of this collected series of writings. It was the range and the variety of its power; of which Julius Hare hardly spoke in excess, when, at this time also, he wrote of the book to its author, that it seemed to him to "con- "tain more and more various beauty than any collection "of the writings of any English author since Shake- "speare." Again the widow of Shelley, to whom he sent the volumes, took occasion to tell him how endeared to her by old associations all his early poetry had been; to relate that her husband's passionate love for *Gebir* had outlived his young college-days, remaining with him to the last; and to add for herself that she had thus been led, since his death, to Landor's later works, in which she had ever found "the noblest sentiments, the "most profound remarks, and the most exquisite ima- "gery, expressed in words that ought to be studied for "the welfare and cultivation of our language." One more opinion only I will quote, from a man of rare genius still living, out of those that Landor sent me on receiving them. "Nothing has been published that I can remem- "ber in which the display is so altogether extraordi- "nary, of the rarest intellectual powers, I do believe, "that were ever brought together in one man." It is certain that no book had been published containing both poetry and prose, by the same writer, of such equal and extraordinary merit.

There was nevertheless one thing wanting in it that left Landor thoroughly dissatisfied till the defect was otherwise supplied. His Latin poetry and prose, in his

own esteem not inferior to his English compositions, were not there. He had yielded to my reasons for not including them. Right or wrong he could not deny that there had long ceased to be, with rarest exceptions, readers for Latin poetry as poetry and not as Latin merely; our college systems having at least done this for us. Not for years only, but generations, Latin poems had been read for literally nothing but their Latinity, just as pictures are often bought for their frames; the painting and the poetry alike going for nothing. What number of readers, then, could he hope to interest, who had made his Latinity but the vehicle for his poetry, and finished his picture as of greater worth than its frame? I might have resisted even the publication, in a separate small volume, of the *Poemata et Inscriptiones, novis auxit Savagius Landor,* which followed the Collected Works in the succeeding year, could I have foreseen all the troubles that attended the proper correction of its proofs. For, an acquaintance with the niceties of the language, which he should have valued least, was exactly that on which my old friend prided himself most; and I should have said to anyone who wished to torment him, Don't question his morals or steal his money, but make him answerable for false quantities or other bad Latin. He raged against the poor printers for such innocent lapses as *Angelina* for *Aufedina,* and, not at all jocosely but quite angrily, asked what business the fools had to be thinking of their Angelinas of the Strand? Yet he knew that he ought to have been more patient. "Truth is that unless I write " with rapidity, I write badly, and unless I read with " rapidity I lose my grasp of the subject. It is curious " that the word *μετάνοια,* which is chiefly used for *re-* " *pentance,* is primitively *after-thought;* and the Italian

" painters call a correction a *pentimento*." He gave forcible illustration of this the day after writing it by sending, in amendment of a poem that had been in print more than fifty-four years, a correction which he had intended to make at its first publication, and through all those years had recollected. "I left my " bed this morning at six, after lying awake since " three, when I suddenly remembered a correction " which I ought to have made fifty-four years ago." Withal there was a lurking dread, an always-present fear, that he was less familiar with the language than formerly, which made him often self-distrustful without occasion; and I have had as many as half-a-dozen letters on the same day correcting in as many ways a correction found at last to be itself not necessary. Even yet I remember with a tender pity, ludicrous in their exaggeration as they were, his sufferings in connection with the first syllable in *flagrans*. He had made it short, but, visited with a sudden fear that it was long, had sent me three several emendations of it. He would have to cancel four pages, for now he felt only too certain of his deplorable oversight, stupidity, ignorance—no name could be too hard; but nobody else must ever know of it. It had kept him awake the whole previous twenty-four hours, and as he wrote he could no longer bid me good-night, for it was already far into morning. But by the side of the letter of which this was the purport, and brought to me by the same post, lay another letter winding-up the story. The second night, or morning, had proved sleepless as the first, and for some hours he had tossed restlessly about under torture of a fresh misgiving that he might at first have been right after all; when suddenly, as the clock struck four on that winter morning, relief came in a remembered line from Virgil,

and he sprang out of bed repeating the 331st verse of the first Georgic,

"ille flăgranti,
Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo," &c.

which he then and there set down in the letter that announced to me the close of his trial. He might as well have waited until daybreak, for he gained nothing by so sacrificing rest; but it was his old impetuous way. He was always inflicting a needless trouble on himself and on me, and pleading still that each should be the last. "*Extremum hunc, Forstere, mihi concede "laborem.*" A week later, a strophe was added to one of the poems in the middle of the night, of which I had next day the quite illegible pencil-scrawl; and I may remark, of one of the best of his Latin poems subsequent to this volume, written *Ad Heroinam* amid the Italian excitements of 1849, and as much admired by Whewell of Trinity as by Aubrey de Vere, that this also was written with the like impetuosity, scrawled with pencil in the dark in the middle of the night, and in that condition sent to me.

We got through our printer's trials at last, so successfully that he believed the quickest eyes would not discover eight faults in the whole eight thousand lines; and then he was all eagerness for the publication, alleging two special reasons. Leipsic fair was coming on, the very market for such a book; and before it could be taken notice of in England it must be got into France and Germany, if we would not have it prohibited in both! Alas, he might have spared himself these anxieties. I never heard that anybody asked for it at Leipsic fair; and sharp as were its epigrams against foreign as well as native rulers and statesmen, it may be doubted whether anyone noticed them save a few ripe scholars.

High opinions from Whewell, Macleane, and others, to the effect that there had been no better Latin poetry since the Virgilian age, were sent him by Julius Hare; who added, for himself, that in spite of Landor's praise of Robert Smith, he suspected that the greatest Latin poet since Lucretius and Catullus was not Bobus, but a countryman of his.*

The special result of the publication was rather for English than Latin readers. It led to the *Hellenics*. Its reception had justified my warning to him that the day was passed in which imagination or fancy could count for anything in a Latin composition, and that if he desired a judgment on his poetry rather than his Latinity he must go before another bench. "You were right," he now suddenly announced to me. "My resolution is "taken to send you a translation of all the Latin idyls, "including my *Gebirus*, out of the *Poemata et Inscrip-* "*tiones*. You shall have one a week; and a project "starts up before my mind. This is, to print them "hereafter, together with the English" (he means the Hellenics already included in the Works), "in one "small volume. It is better, if we can, to breathe life "into such figures as Pygmalion's than into such as "decorate our London tea-gardens." He kept his word, and the result was one of the most delightful of his books. The Latin became English idyls, retaining no trace of the coldness of translation, but all glowing and warm with original life. The Cupid and Pan, the Altar of Modesty, the Espousals of Polyxena, Dryope, Corythus, Pan and Pitys, Coresus and Callirhoë, Catillus

* For various preceding allusions to Landor's Latin compositions, on which he himself set such store, see ante, i. pp. 85, 106, 188, 303 (these refer to the *Gebirus;* what follow chiefly to the *Idyllia Heroica*), 253, 256, 394, 395, 412, 415, 429, 437, 439, 446, 454, 456, 469, 477, 482, 483. See also, of the present volume, pp. 8, 121.

and Salia, the Children of Venus, and the Last of Ulysses, were among those that thus took their place as English poems; and a collection so rich and various of classical scenes and images, limiting the word as we do in sculpture and painting, and associating it with Greece and Rome, does not exist in any other single book in our literature. Let the Corythus be studied, to understand the full value of its contents. Beside its beauty and wealth of imagery, there is also much beauty of form. Each idyl is for the most part exactly what the word implies, a short poem of the heroic cast, a small image of something great, epic in character, and in treatment too. There is a splendid touch in the Ulysses, where you see that by depriving Circe of her youth and restoring her's to Penelope it is meant to show how Vice loses her charm and perishes, and how impotent is Time against Virtue; but such meanings are never by way of sentiment obtruded. They are everywhere, but you must find them. It is not the eagerness to say everything, but the care to reject as much as possible, which impresses the reader throughout; and there is always the absence of exaggeration. When Jove looks, there is no need that he should frown.

> Wide-seeing Zeus lookt down ; as mortals knew
> By the woods bending under his dark eye,
> And huge towers shuddering on the mountain tops,
> And stillness in the valley, in the wold,
> And over the deep waters all round earth.

Certainly this little book, which appeared at the close of 1847, gave convincing proof that up to this date Landor's powers even of fancy had not ebbed a hand's breadth on the sands of time, seventy-three years wide.

## X. Summer Holidays and Guests at Home.

When I first visited Landor in Bath the city was only accessible by coach, and no coach left after eight o'clock in the morning. But these difficulties in the way of intercourse soon disappeared, and the travelling that had occupied two entire days took up little more than double the same number of hours. The first time Mr. Dickens went with me the railroad was open, and it had become possible to leave in the afternoon, dine and pass the evening with Landor, and breakfast the next morning in London. Still vividly remembered by us both are such evenings, when a night's sleep purchased for us cheaply the pleasure of being present with him on his birthday; and I think it was at the first celebration of the kind in the first of his Bath lodgings, 35 St. James's-square, that the fancy which took the form of Little Nell in the *Curiosity Shop* first dawned on the genius of its creator. No character in prose fiction was a greater favourite with Landor. He thought that, upon her, Juliet might for a moment have turned her eyes from Romeo, and that Desdemona might have taken her hair-breadth escapes to heart, so interesting and pathetic did she seem to him; and when, some years later, the circumstance I have named was recalled to him, he broke into one of those whimsical bursts of comical extravagance out of which arose the fancy of Boythorn. With tremendous emphasis he confirmed the fact, and added that he had never in his life regretted anything so much as his having failed to carry out an intention he had formed respecting it; for he meant to have purchased that house, 35 St. James's-square, and then and there to have burnt it to the ground, to the end that no meaner association should

ever desecrate the birthplace of Nell. Then he would pause a little, become conscious of our sense of his absurdity, and break into a thundering peal of laughter.

Another of these evenings, when Mr. Dickens and myself had travelled to him expressly to celebrate his birthday, returning the same night to London, is worth recalling because of our talk having led to his writing the quatrain adopted afterwards as the motto to his *Last Fruit*. It was his own version of the moral of his own life in its aims and enjoyments; and, to all who could so accept it, a very terse and conclusive summing-up of Epicurean philosophy. But, on another subject, Landor also talked that night in a way that hardly befitted a true disciple of Epicurus, enlarging on the many tears that *David Copperfield* had caused him to shed; to which the author of that delightful book himself replied by a question, which, from so powerful and so gentle a master of both laughter and tears, startled us then, and may make the matter worth allusion still. "But is it not yet more wonderful that "one of the most popular books on earth has absolutely "nothing in it to cause anyone either to laugh or cry?" Such, he proceeded to say, was to be affirmed with confidence of De Foe's masterpiece; he instanced the death of Friday, in that marvellous novel, as one of the least tender, and, in the true sense, least sentimental things ever written; and he accounted for the prodigious effect which the book has had upon an unexampled number and variety of readers, though without tears in it, or laughter, or even any mention of love, by its mere homely force and intensity of truth. Not every schoolboy alone was interested by it, but every man who had ever been one. I may add, though connected with the night referred to solely by the subject thus introduced,

that six years later, when a project was on foot to make provision for a then living and destitute descendant of the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, Landor sent a letter to the *Times* which brought us all the help we sought.

A line or two only can I give from its eloquent and touching appeal. "De Foe has left one descendant— " a Crusoe without a Friday—in an island to him a " desert. . . . There are men who may be warmed by " the reflected glory of their ancestors; but, however " elevated and unclouded, it falls feebly on the death- " bed of the forsaken. . . . Daniel De Foe wants no " statue, and is far beyond any other want; but, alas, " there is one behind who is not so. Let all contribute " one penny for one year: poor James De Foe has " lived seventy-seven, and his dim eyes can not look " far into another. . . . It was in the power of Johnson " to relieve the granddaughter of Milton; Mr. Editor, " it is in yours to prop up the last scion of De Foe. " If Milton wrote the grandest poem and the most en- " ergetic and eloquent prose of any writer in any coun- " try; if he stood erect before Tyranny, and covered with " his buckler not England only, but nascent nations; " if our great prophet raised in vision the ladder that " rose from earth to heaven, with angels upon every " step of it; lower indeed, but not less useful, were the " energies of De Foe. He stimulated to enterprise " those colonies of England which extend over every " sea, and which carry with them, from him, the spirit " and the language that will predominate throughout " the world. Achilles and Homer will be forgotten " before Crusoe and De Foe." The poor old man soon after died; but the money obtained comforted his last days, and has since contributed to his daughter's wants. The pennies did not come in very freely, but some

larger gifts were generously made. The late Lord Lansdowne sent me fifty pounds, and Lord Palmerston gave a hundred out of the Queen's bounty.

The visit to Landor last described was made in 1849, five years after he had crossed the bridge of seventy; and the post of the day following our return brought me the quatrain I have mentioned, which it may interest the reader to see, on the opposite leaf, in fac-simile as it came. "My thanks were not spoken " to you and Dickens for your journey of two hundred " miles upon my birthday. Here they are—not visible " on the surface of the paper, nor on any surface what- " ever, but in the heart that is dictating this letter. On " the night you left me I wrote the following DYING " SPEECH OF AN OLD PHILOSOPHER:

> " I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;
> Nature I loved, and, next to Nature, Art;
> I warm'd both hands against the fire of life;
> It sinks, and I am ready to depart."

In a previous section Landor's summer visits to his sister Elizabeth have been named. To her at Warwick he gave always, in each year, the largest part of all the time he passed away from Bath; but some small portion of every summer holiday, for many years, he gave to me in London, and of his ever-cordial reception at Gore-house I have already spoken. He made visits regularly (and few gave him so much happiness) to Lady Sawle in Cornwall, and often to his friend Sir William Moles-worth at Pencarrow; North Wales was familiar to him as long as Ablett lived; and deserving to be marked and set apart, for the pleasure they yielded as well to his friends as himself, were such visits as he paid to Arch-deacon Hare at his living of Hurstmonceaux, to his brother Robert at his rectory of Birlingham, to Lord

My dear Fossier, My thanks were not spoken to you as [illegible]ickness for your journey of two hundred miles upon my birthday. Here they are - not visible on the surface of the paper nor on any surface whatever but in the heart that is dictating this letter.

On the night you left me I wrote the following, which

you may insert or not in the
Examiner.

Ever affectionately yrs

Dying speech of an old philosopher.

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;
Nature I loved and, next to Nature Art;
I warm'd both hands before the fire of Life;
It sinks; and I am ready to depart.

Walter Savage Landor

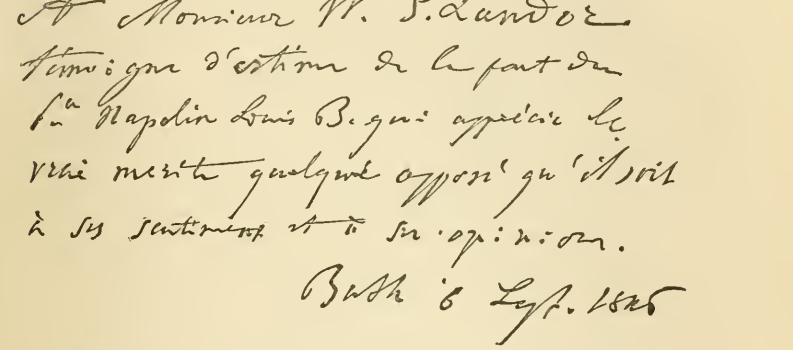
31. Jan. 1849.

Nugent at The Lilies near Aylesbury, to Kenyon at his villa in Wimbledon or in the Isle of Wight, and to General Napier at Blackheath or Clapham-park. He exerted on these occasions a fascination that few could resist; enjoyment and good-humour so abounding, flashes and thunderbolts of wrath so harmless; and, whether a guest himself or receiving guests, attracting everyone at such times by the courtliness of his manner, by an old-fashioned dignity never absent from his bearing, and withal by an absence from it, to a curious degree, of the self-assertion often loud and excessive in his writings. As on a former page Mr. Kirkup said of him, he was chivalresque of the old school; or, as I heard a more unsparing observer say, after a visit made to him in Bath, he was truly a royal kind of man. "I am expecting Mr. Carlyle on Wed-" nesday," Landor wrote to me on the 25th of July 1850: "it will be a holiday, a gaudy-day, for me." It was after that visit the remark just quoted was made to me. The evening so passed in Bath has to the survivor seemed always memorable. He brought away from it an impression never since effaced, not of the wrath only of the divine Achilles, though it thundered and lightened over many subjects, but of the manners that should belong also to such a leader of men; of a hospitality and courtesy in its way quite noble; and of scholarship, in the old fine and beautiful sense that the word once had, such as Carlyle had met with in no other man. Nor was the liking this meeting left behind it less strong on the other side. "I am a great advocate " for hero-worship," Landor wrote to me two years after the visit; "and when you have looked closely into " Carlyle you may discover him to be quite as much of " a hero as Cromwell."

From a hero cast in a different mould, but who has since had one of the greatest parts to play in the world which can be appointed to any man, he received also a visit in Bath which dates a few years earlier, some months after the escape from Ham of the Prince Louis Napoleon. "Colonel Jervis told me yesterday," Landor wrote to me on August 28, 1846, "that Prince Louis "Napoleon was in Bath, and had done me the favour to "mention me, and I shall therefore leave my card at "his hotel."* The office of master of the ceremonies was in those days not extinct in the city of Beau Nash, and Colonel Jervis was the last who held it. Three or four days later he wrote again. "Yesterday I had a visit "from the Prince Louis Bonaparte, who told me he had "completed his military work and would give me a copy. "In return for this civility I told him I should certainly "have requested his acceptance of my Works, only that "they contained some severe strictures on his uncle "the emperor. He said he knew perfectly well my "opinions, and admired the honesty with which I ex-"pressed them on all occasions. He came on purpose "to invite me to meet Lady Blessington to-morrow. "He had called once before. I told him, in the course "of our interview, that he had escaped two great curses "—a prison and a throne. He smiled at this, but made "no remark." The Prince kept his promise; and from the book which he gave to Landor, *Etudes sur le Passé et l'Avenir de l'Artillerie par le Prince Napoléon-Louis Bonaparte*, and which is now in my possession, I may, perhaps to the greater satisfaction of the reader, present

* In an account of Landor written shortly after his death it was stated that at the very time of his thus meeting Louis Napoleon in Bath "there was in a boarding-school twelve miles off, on the Clifton-"downs, a pretty girl—grand-niece to a maiden lady living in a very "small house at Dumfries—who is now Empress of France."

what the author had written on the fly-leaf ("A Mon-
" sieur W. S. Landor, témoigne d'estime de la part du
" P^ce^ Napoléon Louis B. qui apprécie le vrai mérite
" quelque opposé qu'il soit à ses sentimens et à son
" opinion. Bath, 6 Sept. 1846") in another fac-simile.



If amid the splendours of his later destiny it has ever happened to the Emperor of France to think there might be truth in what Landor then said to him, and that a throne was not, after all, the supremest of earthly blessings, one may fancy it likely to have occurred to him amid the horrors of the Orsini massacre twelve years later. Two years before that miserable attempt, in the same city of Bath, Orsini had been Landor's guest. He had gone to him with letters from Italians in London of high character and moderate opinions, Piedmontese; and there is no doubt that up to and beyond that date (1856) the unhappy man did really believe in Piedmont as the hope of Italy, that he quarrelled with Mazzini on this ground, and that, during the early part of his residence in England, he had been honestly exerting himself to discover in its direction help for the rest of Italy. Baffled in this hope, he projected, under other influences, the en-

terprise at once so cruel and so wicked: cruel, because, even supposing him capable of justifying to himself, which certainly no man could to another, an enterprise aimed at what he held to be a guilty life, this involved also innocent lives, and among them those of women and children. In the excitement of the time Landor was publicly named as friendly to Orsini's later opinions, and he was at some pains himself as publicly to declare that the imputation was grossly unjust.

I satisfied myself then that it was so. It is true that Orsini dined with him; but another gentleman still living was present, and it is certain that nothing could have passed at that interview respecting the French emperor inconsistent with the strong opinion which Landor undoubtedly entertained at the time, that his death would be a calamity both to England and France. He had joined in an address from Bath sent up to Napoleon on his visit to England, and this appears to have been the subject of some remonstrance on Orsini's part; whereupon Landor's friend, Mr. Sandford, well known also to myself for moderation as well as wisdom in his opinions, joined Landor in advising the Italian to forbear from any declaration then against the ruler of France. "Miserable Orsini!" Landor wrote to me in January 1858, the day after the fatal attempt: "he sat with "me two years ago at the table on which I am now "writing. Dreadful work! horrible crime! To inflict "death on a hundred for the sin of one! Such a blow "can serve only to awaken tyranny, reverberating on "the brass helmets of her satellites."*

* I shall probably be forgiven for preserving some extracts from a letter of my own to Landor (found among his papers) replying at this date to what he had written of some supposed recollections of mine concerning the Prince, which I was unable to confirm. I make no apology for printing them exactly as written: the lady named as

In the same letter to which this was a postscript he had reminded me of an evening passed with me in London eight years before, when he met Macaulay, whose History he had now only lately made acquaintance with, and found less satisfactory than his Lays of Rome. "I

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one of the only survivors of the dinner-party referred to in them, having since herself passed away.

". . . You are however right as to the meeting of which Lady " Blessington told you. On the first day of Louis Napoleon's arrival " in London after the escape from Ham, I formed one of a party of " five, Lady Blessington, d'Orsay, Marguerite Power, her sister Ellen, " and myself, who sat down with him to dinner at Gore House. He, " Miss Power, and myself, are the survivors of the party, to whom, " after dinner, he described his way of escape by passing through " the fortress-gates in a labourer's blouse and sabots, with a heavy " plank on his shoulder, flinging off the plank into the ditch by the " wall of the chateau, and afterward, shod as he was, running nearly " two miles to where a little cart provided by Conneau waited to " take him within reach of the coast, from which he had crossed but " the day before: all of it told in his usual un-French way, without " warmth or excitement. Before or since I have never seen his face " as it was then; for he had shaved his moustaches as part of his " disguise, and his lower and least pleasing features were completely " exposed under the straggling stubble of hair beginning again to " show itself. He gave me afterwards, with an inscription to me on " the fly-leaf written by himself, a book which I still keep called the " *Prisoner of Ham*, with a clever pen-and-ink sketch not unlike him " as he was in those days. The only other real talk with him that I " particularly remember was about Cromwell. D'Orsay had given " him exaggerated account, in his high-flown good-natured way, of " a memoir of the Protector by me; and this led to my entering on " one occasion, at his request, into some detail of explanation as to " the conferences preceding Cromwell's rejection of the crown: an- " other thing referred to, as I well remember, being the essay written " by Cowley, whose play-actor theory he rejected, expressing his " belief in Oliver's downright sincerity. Oddly enough, as these " things come back to me, I find I also know something of the man " Allsop, in whose name Orsini's passport was made out, and who is " accused of complicity in Orsini's crime. I met him at Charles " Lamb's, in the last year of Elia's life. He had given Coleridge " 200*l.* on some occasion to help him in a distress; and so had re- " commended himself to Lamb. He afterwards published, without " his name, a wonderfully foolish book called *Recollections and Let- " ters of Coleridge*. And now, I perceive, 200*l.* is offered here in " Scotland-yard for his apprehension as accessory to murder. Vanity " is the never-failing lever, by which men of this sentimental sort " may at all times be lifted out of the flat commonplace of their " silliness and good intentions, into any kind of monstrous enter- " prise."

"sat next him at your table and tried to enter into "conversation with him, telling him that he and Livy "were under mutual obligations; and that I doubted "whether in his Ballads of Rome he was most indebted "to Livy or Livy to him. It would not do. Yet it was "no small compliment, for there was hardly a genius "so exalted as Livy's in all the interval between Æs-"chylus and Dante. But there are some who do not "know it, and this was probably the case with Macau-"lay. I knew at Florence his uncle General Macaulay, "an excellent man, who showed me a very elegant "Imaginary Conversation by his nephew, which must "have been one of his earliest writings; and which he "said was written in consequence of mine. My first "two volumes had been published only a few months "before." He was better pleased with Milman, who delighted him on one occasion by repeating very humorously a suppressed stanza of the *Devil's Walk*, written by Southey at a time (already referred to in this memoir*) when Lord Lonsdale had greatly exasperated both him and Wordsworth, wherein the devil was compared to the lord of the dale. Landor's prolonged roar of laughter at this, and Milman's own enjoyment of those peals of mirth as they rose and rose again, were things rememberable. But one of Landor's greatest London favourites, of those who were not among his intimate friends, was the author of the *Pleasures of Memory*. He always got on well with Rogers, of whom he saw something at nearly all his visits to London, as well at St. James's-place as at Kenyon's house and mine; and with whom kindly messages were frequently interchanged. "Poor Rogers!" he wrote on hearing of his accident: "I think of him much in that sad and

* See ante, i. 236.

" silent captivity of his bedroom. When he goes, if a " star of the first magnitude will not have set, a bright " lamp at the dinner-table will have gone out. No man " told a story better, or loved art so well."

His own love of art he indulged on these occasions by passing a portion of nearly every day in the National Gallery, where his chief favourite was Hogarth. " What " nonsense I see written of Hogarth's defects as a col- " ourist," he wrote to me after one of his visits. " He " was in truth far more than the most humorous, than " the most pathetic and most instructive, of painters. " He excelled at once in composition, in drawing, and " in colouring; and of what other can we say the same? " In his portraits he is as true as Gainsborough, as " historical as Titian. It is equally fortunate and won- " derful that we have good examples of him in our " National Gallery." At the Academy exhibitions he had great enjoyment. " If I pluck up courage to move " Londonward this spring," he wrote in 1851, " it can- " not be earlier than July, when I have promised Ken- " yon to spend a week with him at Wimbledon. I " shall stand again before the wonders of Landseer, " Mulready, and Maclise, and look once more on the " waves about Ischia, over which your Neptunian friend " *motos præstat componere fluctus*. For surely Stan- " field is god of the sea. But perhaps it is because " my heart lies usually among the animals (so do men " call them, not intending any compliment), that the " dying solitary stag of Landseer made an impression " upon me beyond them all. There are two men, " Hogarth and Landseer, who affect my heart the most " deeply of all painters, and Raffael alone can detain me " so long a time before him." Of music he was also passionately fond; and though he gave away, from time

to time, almost every book possessed by himself, he had extraordinary enjoyment in wandering up and down a library belonging to a friend.

This pleasure always awaited him at Julius Hare's house and at mine, and welcomes, he would truly say, counted by as many thousands as our books; our Dii Lares and Dii Penates, as he told me it was Parr's unvarying custom to say (though he never could explain the difference between them), all bowing down before him; and such attentions paid him on every side as he would protest that he had never received since what he called the heroic ages, when epistles were written him by conquered heroines. I heard from him during his first visit to Hurstmonceaux (I think in 1843), when Hare and his friend Bunsen were engaged in the pious duty of doing honour to the memory of Arnold, and had solicited Landor's help towards a Latin inscription, which was to have for its model the famous one on the Scipios. It was Landor's belief, in which he was surely right, that there was not only much difficulty, but a want of keeping and of fitness, in applying classical Latin to the commemoration of Christian thoughts and Christian relations: but his corrections of what had been written were gratefully received, and, in the state wherein finally it left his hands, it expressed worthily two of the most marked characteristics of Arnold's life; his constant effort to uphold the liberty of the Christian laity against all hierarchal usurpations, and his unwearying endeavour to make Christianity not a dead form of words, but a living and actuating principle in the minds and hearts of his pupils. Landor's old school-days at Rugby gave him a personal interest in everything connected with the place, and with infinite gratification he received, some years later, a famous record

of Rugby schooldays very wonderfully contrasting with his own, which had been sent as a tribute from Tom Brown to the most famous of living Rugbæans. "I "am sure," wrote the author of this delightful book, "you will feel that the approval of no living man can "give the author more pleasure than that of the oldest "and most distinguished of those who have been edu- "cated at the same school with himself."

The enjoyment of one of his visits to Hurstmonceaux had been greatly enhanced by meeting there the hero of Scinde, the brother of his friend the historian. His admiration for both these extraordinary men amounted almost to a passion. After Wellington, his ideal of a great captain, he thought Charles the most illustrious of soldiers; and after Livy, to him the very genius of history, he thought William the most powerful and the most picturesque of historians. Their particular bearing towards each other had also a wonderful charm for him, by its very contrast with their general attitude towards nearly all the world beside; and I well remember with what a glow of emotion he repeated to me almost the first words addressed to him by the elder of the brothers, declaring that the antique world had nothing to show more touching of the Scipios or the Gracchi. Modestly disclaiming his title to the homage which Landor was offering him, the great soldier bade him reserve it for his brother William alone. "This brother," he said, "is indeed an extraordinary man. All *his* fame he "has earned by the unaided force of his genius. My "soldiers fought *me* through my work and errors." In such a saying one may find some clue to the devoted attachment felt for both the brothers by all who had kindly or near association with them. With frailties of temper that too often presented to the outer world

only what seemed arrogant or self-willed: in all the inner relations they were unselfish to a fault, tender and humane as the gentlest of women, chivalrous, simple, and brave. Not that Landor was at all given to observe any such distinctions in his liking for them. It is more probable that he did not admire them least when their judgments were warped the most, for he made all their quarrels his own; though it is only fair to add that the heat of temper and impetuosity of language with which he fought their battles, were as free as their own from anything ungenerous or unworthy. "You don't "draw your ale mild," wrote William Napier to him on one occasion, "any more than I do; but if Pam or "Johnny call you out, I will be your second."

There was indeed, between Landor and the younger of the brothers, a liking confirmed by long personal intimacy, which was hardly capable of increase on either side; and which had begun, on the part of Napier, before Landor was personally known to him. No fame had been dearer to the Peninsular captain than that of his old chief who fell at Corunna. By the splendour of his life, the glory of his death, and the injustice done to his memory, the career of Sir John Moore had fulfilled, to the ardent young soldier's imagination, the uncommon exploits as well as common fate of a hero; and in his maturer years Napier never forgot, that, when Moore's rude grave had hardly closed, Landor was in the field to do battle for him against one of his own dearest friends.* Differences of opinion Napier had with Landor, and some not slight, but none that were not covered by a kindly tolerance. He could forgive him his onslaughts on the soldiership of Napoleon, though he would never let them disturb his own faith in

* See ante, i. 239-241.

it, as to which, he would say, he was as a rock, around which Landor, like the ocean, might rage as he would. "If you will, you may submerge me, but you cannot "shake me." Nay, he could even tolerate an allusion of Landor's which he thought unfair to the memory of Charles Fox. "I own to having been grieved for the "moment," he wrote; "but we differ as to so many "public men, that this passed away instantly; because "there is one public man upon whose character we are "entirely and always agreed, namely, Walter Savage "Landor. I know he is all truth, and sincerity, and "honour, in feeling; and therefore his opinions, though "as in the instance of Mr. Fox they may grieve, can "never make me angry. It is a different way of look-"ing at a picture, nothing more." In another letter to Landor of the same date (1851) he protests against a comparison of him to an American writer, made in one of the journals. "Your vagaries, if I may without of-"fending you use the word, are, in comparison with "this man's, the gambols and boundings of a lion, from "light to shade and back again, to the mere mouthings "and grimaces of a monkey at the moon." Nor was Landor ever left in doubt of the value of his own good word to Napier, who repeatedly assured him, with affecting earnestness, that his genius was not a greater pleasure for all the world than his friendly feelings toward himself were a delight to him personally. "I need not" he wrote, in one of the last of his letters written with his own hand (18th April 1857), "I need not tell you "now, my dear Landor, that your praise is manna to "me; for, though I am not in a desart as to praise, "most of it appears dry and unprofitable in comparison "with yours. Not all, though; some others there are "who give me quails."

Such grateful offerings made directly to Landor himself require no confirmation; but for other reasons a few more words may be added from Napier's defence of Landor to a friend who did not know him, from a charge of having favoured assassination in a letter defending tyrannicide. Napier himself will be forgotten before its touching opening sentences. "This," the 10th of November 1856, "is the anniversary of "the battle of the Nivelle, in which I won my lieut.-"colonelcy. I was then strong and swift of foot; only "one man got into the rocks of La Rhune before me, "and he was but a step; yet eight hundred noble "veterans, strong as lions, were striving madly to be "first. I am now old, feeble, bent, miserable, and my "eyes are dim, very dim, with weeping for my lost "child; and my brain is weak also; I cannot read "with pleasure, and still less can I think and judge "of what other people write. You must not therefore "expect from me an essay on Landor's noble letter; "and it would require an essay, it is so full of meaning. I call it noble while differing on many points "pushed out by him like needles against the world "and its opinions and conventionalism. I call it noble, "I say, because it is not Landor's writing, but Landor himself, bold, generous, brave, and reckless where "his feelings as a human being are stirred. I have "myself no objection to the death of King Bomba, or "any other ruffian like him; hang them as high as "Haman: but once allow tyrannicide, and the best "man in the world is no longer safe. Well, but this "mistake does not make Landor obnoxious to anybody who knows him, because it is not his feeling; "he is reckless in expression only, not in deeds. And "again I say his letter *is Landor*, bold, original, and

" vigorous, his right and his wrong alike. He is an " oak with many gnarled branches and queer excres- " cences, but always an oak, and one that will be ad- " mired for ages."*

In the summer of the year before this letter was written, Landor had paid his last visit to London, and seen Napier there for the last time. It had become very difficult now to persuade him to leave Bath. He was readier than formerly with excuses for not visiting us. His excuses were sometimes the reverse of complimentary, as when he explained (1853) his disinclination to come to the great city, because there if he saw three men he might be pretty sure that a couple of them were scoundrels, while out of the same number in the country it might be doubted if the villanous proportion would be more than one. The following year he gave a more touching reason, somewhat nearer the truth. "I too " often think at night of what I had been seeing in " the morning, poor mothers, half-starved children, and " girls habitually called unfortunate by people who drop " the word as lightly as if it had no meaning in it. " Little do they think that they are speaking of the " fallen angels; the real ones, not the angels of mytho- " logy and fable. So many heart-aches always leave me " one."

At last however he again came to us in 1855. He desired to see the palace at Sydenham, and my old friend Sir Joseph Paxton had promised to set the great fountains playing in his honour. I took rooms for him in the hotel adjoining; and a part of the time he passed with Napier, dining with him at Clapham-park, and inducing him to come over to his hotel. A few lines

* Ante, pp. 434-5. And see the remarks made at the close of my first volume, pp. 492, 496, &c.

from a letter to Lady Sawle, written at the close of this visit, will very succinctly describe it, and the persons it enabled him to see. "I found my old friend," he writes (July 1855), "in better health than I ex- "pected. He had never seen the Crystal-palace. Lame "as he is, he came over the following day with Lady "Napier, and we went together over the whole of it. "And only fancy, the great fountains were set playing "for me! The beautiful N. showed me her little girl, "who was very amiable with me, as little girls always "were: I mean very little ones. I was obliged to "declare to Lady Napier that if she spoilt her grand- "child, I would never make her a proposal. I spent "some hours too with Kossuth, who could not dine "with me and Forster, because he had to receive a "deputation quite unexpected; and by no means the "smallest part of my pleasure was the introduction to "me, the following day, of Mr. Lytton. None of the "younger poets of the present day breathes so high a "spirit of poetry. Of what impressed me most in the "palace itself I should tell you that I saw the statue of "Satan by ——, and the wonderful picture of Cimabue "and Giotto by ——. Alas! alas! every name flies "off from my memory when I would seize it. Leigh- "ton, I should have said, is the painter: the sculptor "is Lough." In making this holiday visit, it was his intention to have gone with me at its close to pass a few days with Kenyon at Cowes; but when the time came he pleaded his eighty years, and, with amusing exaggeration of Southampton Water into a rolling tempestuous sea, protested that if he were to indulge his wish to accompany me, I should have to borrow a shroud from some sailor, and a couplet from Tibullus, made to fit:

"Hic jacet immiti consumptus morte viator,
Forsterum terrâ dum sequiturque mari."

This was his last visit to London: indeed his last absence from Bath, until he quitted it for ever, with one exception. He went once more to Llanthony. "Alas, "my dear friend," he wrote in January 1856, "I would "rather undertake a voyage to Babylon than to Lon- "don. One sorrowful task is imposed on me—to take "two ladies to my abbey. Sad scene! sad remem- "brances! Forty-three years have passed since I saw "the place, and never had I wished to see it again." A few days later brought me nevertheless my usual summons on his birthday:

"I am, but would not be, a hermit;
Forster! come hither and confirm it.
I may not offer 'beechen bowl,'
But I can give you soup and sole,
Sherry and (grown half-mythic) port . .
Wise men would change their claret for't;
Quince at dessert, and apricot . .
In short, with you what have I not?"

Even our meetings on that day were now to close, as he too surely predicted in a touching letter after our last celebration of it. "It appears to me that "neither of us will have anything more to say on that "subject. However, I have enjoyed better health this "winter, such as it has been, than in almost any other "since I left my paradise in Italy. Strength alone "fails me in the corporeal, and memory in the mental. "I remember what I would forget, and I forget what I "would remember. I have nothing to do now but to "look into the fire, and see it burn down, as I myself "have done. Solitude was always dear to me; and at "present more than ever; once a playful friend, and "now a quiet nurse. Scarcely a soul of my old ac-

" quaintance is left in Bath. All have departed; the " most part to that country where there neither are nor " ever will be railroads. I must perforce remain where " I am. I have only one more journey to make, and " I hope it may be by an express train. I was very " near taking my ticket a little while ago, and now " stop only in the waiting-room." Within the last few years, death had indeed been busy around him; and it remains that I should give brief mention of his losses in this way, and the penalties he was paying for extreme old age.

## XI. Deaths of old Friends.

The first loss by which Landor suffered keenly was that of Joseph Ablett, to whose generous kindness he first owed his Fiesolan villa. We were under promise together to visit Llanbedr in the spring of 1848; when, early in the January of that year, our loss was announced to us. "Poor dear Ablett!" Landor wrote: "at whose " house we were to meet in the spring, died on the 9th, " and I can remember few things that have caused " tears to burst forth from me as this did. Never " was there so kind-hearted a man. His manner " (though never to us) often seemed cold: but even then " there was a hot spring gushing from a vast depth " through a glacier. I heard almost at the same time " of the death of a companion of my early childhood, " on whose marriage I think I wrote my first verses;* " but her loss has grieved me incomparably less than " that of my later friend. Good, generous Ablett! one " more tear for thee!" He never would admit that age,

* His cousin, Mrs. Shuckburgh: see ante, i. 29.

which remembered its sorrows longer than youth, had even the poor advantage of feeling them less acutely.

The following year carried off the brother next to himself in years. "My brother Charles," he wrote to me on the 8th July 1849, "the liveliest, wittiest, most ener-" getic and independent of men, is lying on his death-" bed. This very instant a letter tells me he is dead." The handsomest of the family in person, Charles Landor had singularly genial and pleasant manners, and, though too passionately fond of field-sports and outdoor occupations to have time for cultivation of the pursuits that attracted his brothers, had many of the accomplishments in which they excelled, with a much keener observation in the affairs of life. Exactly a month before this death of his brother there had come the news of Lady Blessington's, and the way in which this affected her old friend has been seen. "Yet why," he wrote to me, "call it sad? It was the very mode of departure " she anticipated and desired: as I do too." Before the year closed he had also himself a warning. Death had taken aim at him and missed him, he said; but let the next be more successful, if so he might be spared the sorrowing over friends. "Let him take another as " soon as he pleases, but pass by those I love." A vain wish, as he knew well.

> Ah! he strikes all things, all alike,
> But bargains: those he will not strike.

After not many months he lost another friend for whose summons to a promised visit at Aylesbury in the autumn of 1850 we were both waiting when the sad intelligence came. During the two preceding years Landor had seen much of Lord Nugent, and his allusions to him in casual verses were frequent. The Hungarian war had roused the warmest zeal of both, and

they took unwearying delight in rendering service to such of the leaders of that gallant people as were in England after the struggle. I was witness to Landor's grief when he heard that our friend was taken from us, and I strongly sympathised with an opinion he expressed publicly at the time that Nugent had deserved better treatment than his party gave him. Some public men are unlucky, and he has been longer remembered by a joke of Canning's than for qualities of his own deserving the highest respect. He was a courageous and consistent politician, and few men had been so at the cost of greater worldly sacrifices. To Landor he was further endeared by social characteristics of the pleasantest kind; and perhaps by some resemblances in temperament, which made them both, as the survivor confessed, apt to be ardent after impracticable things.

> "We schemed such projects as we might
> In younger days with better right.
> Athens was ours; and who but we
> Shouted along Thermopylæ!"

More of his Irish than of his English stock was indeed to be observed in Nugent. He did not inherit from his mother his title only. Her father was Lord Clare, to whom the Haunch of Venison was written; and his grandson had not a little of the genial nature, the cordial tastes, the respectable talents for literature, even the reported portliness of person, which distinguished Goldsmith's friend, who had himself written that ode to Pulteney which contains the masterly verse quoted by Gibbon in his character of Brutus.

The next of Landor's friends who passed away had been the heroine of much of his minor poetry. To her were addressed, amid many others as tender and graceful, the lovely lines in which he describes himself, when

first she separated from him and crossed the sea, as having no power to rest

> But on the very thought that swells with pain.
> O bid me hope again!
> O give me back what earth, what (without you)
> Not heaven itself can do,
> One of the golden days that we have past;
> And let it be my last!
> Or else the gift would be, however sweet,
> Fragile and incomplete.

"I have lost my beloved friend of half a century, Jane "the Countess de Molandè," he wrote to me on the 3d of August 1851. "She died at Versailles on the last of "July after sixteen hours' illness. This most afflicting "intelligence was sent me by her son William, who "was with her at the last hour. She will be brought "over to the family vault, in county Meath, of her first "husband, Swifte, great-great-grandson of the uncle "of the Dean of St. Patrick. I hoped she might have "seen my grave. Hers I shall never see, but my "thoughts will visit it often. Though other friends "have died in other days (why cannot I help this run-"ning into verse?) One grave there is where memory "sinks and stays." It was to see Landor at his very best to see him in the presence of this lady. In language, manner, look, voice, even in the minutest points of gesture and bearing, it was all that one could possibly imagine of the perfection of chivalrous respect. Even when I first saw her, a bright goodhumoured Irish face was all her beauty, but youth still lingered in her eyes and hair; and a little scene between her and Landor at the interview was perfectly expressed in a few lines of dialogue written by him next day.

> *M.* Why, who now in the world is this?
> It cannot be the same . . I miss
> The gift he always brought . . a kiss. .

Yet still I know my eyes are bright,
And not a single hair turn'd white.

*L.* O idol of my youth! upon
That joyous head gray hair there's none,
Nor may there ever be! gray hair
Is the unthrifty growth of Care,
Which she has planted—you see where.

Two years later brought the same fatal summons for one who during many years had been held in high esteem by all the Landor family. Mr. Rosenhagen died in the middle of the December of 1853; and when my old friend wrote to me as usual on Christmas-day, the event was painfully affecting him. "Merry Christmases (that is "the right word, and no other will do) are mostly over "with childhood, though they sometimes boisterously "burst into the circle when they ought to be a-bed. I "am in perfectly good health, but my upper teeth are "as useless as the fleets in the Euxine; and of all infi- "delities the worst is their secession. I have been very "sad too since the loss of my friend Rosenhagen. In "writing the name my hand trembles. Never was "there a better man or more perfect gentleman. With "his father and himself and Thomas Grenville, have "passed away any remaining chances of discovering "the writer of Junius. However, it matters little,— "Johnson's letter to Chesterfield is worth them all, "admirable as they are."

But the year then beginning, his eightieth, was to be the saddest of all to him. It opened with the death of the last survivor of those who had known him at Bath at the beginning of the century. "My earliest Bath "friend," he wrote to me on the 6th of February 1854, "Miss Caldwell, sister to good dear Lady Belmore, of "whose death I so lately wrote to you, died a few days "ago. I had known them since the beginning of the

" century. Alas! I feel that I am gone very far down " the vale of years: a vale in which there is no fine " prospect on either side, and the few flowers are scarcely " worth the gathering." Nor had the month thus mournfully opened come to its close before a much sadder loss had fallen on him. The companion of his childhood, his eldest and only surviving sister Elizabeth, died in the family house at Warwick. Her illness had not been serious at first, and to the end there seemed to be hope: but on the 2d of March he wrote to me that he had lost his earliest, dearest, and nearly his last friend; and that grief had taken away his sleep, appetite, digestion, everything. It was indeed a hard and heavy blow, though there was much to soften it in the many memorials she left of a tender regard that had survived and been true to him through all his life's vicissitudes.

His letters for some time bore the trace of grief in even the tone with which they spoke of ordinary things; and one of them, written little more than a month after this last great loss, in which he described himself watching the lights of a Bath sunset disappear, and thinking of the friends who like them had gone out as suddenly, I felt to be very touching at the time. "What de- " lightful weather! Last evening" (8th April 1854) " I walked in the park, and saw the sun gradually " illuminate the whole of Marlborough-buildings, win- " dow after window, six or seven at the time. Many " of my old friends lived there, and went away in like " manner, one after another. This evening I took my " usual walk a little earlier, and, sitting afterwards " without candles for about an hour as I always do, I " have had the same feeling as I watched the twilight " darken on my walls, and my pictures vanish from

" before me. I make no change in these lines, but " write them as they have risen to my mind:

My pictures blacken in their frames
As night comes on,
And youthful maids and wrinkled dames
Are now all one.

Death of the Day! a sterner Death
Did worse before:
The fairest form and balmiest breath
Away he bore."

As the same year wore on, he saw too surely another grief preparing for him. He wrote to me in July of the illness of Julius Hare; and soon after, on his friend's expressed wish to see him, he went to Hurstmonceaux, from which I received soon after some verses written by him on his friend's having placed in his hands a small unpublished poem of Wordsworth's.

" Derwent! Winander! your twin poets come
Star-crown'd along with you, nor stand apart.
Wordsworth comes hither, hither Southey comes,
His friend and mine, and every man's who lives,
Or who shall live when days far-off have risen.
Here are they with me yet again, here dwell
Among the sages of antiquity,
Under his hospitable roof whose life
Surpasses theirs in strong serenity,
Whose genius walks more humbly, stooping down
From the same highth to cheer the weak of soul
And guide the erring from the tortuous way.
Hail, ye departed! hail, thou later friend,
Julius! but never by my voice invoked
With such an invocation . . *hail, and live!*"

It was, alas! rather fear than hope that had suggested this earnest prayer; for, though the good archdeacon had rallied somewhat, Landor left him with the feeling that they would not meet again; and the last letter addressed to him by Julius he received not many weeks later.

It spoke of matters they had talked about together, and especially of an old mulberry-tree in the garden at Warwick celebrated in Landor's verse. The ancient gods and heroes, said Julius, had each his favourite plant; and there were other reasons, which he had tried to express in unaccustomed verse, why Landor should have the mulberry.

> Of yore in Babylon the mulberry
> Changed colour at fond lovers' misery;
> In England, to her noblest poets dear,
> It keeps the records of glad friendships here:
> 'Twas SHAKESPEARE'S, MILTON'S, now 'tis LANDOR'S tree;
> Precious to those who love the gifted three.

—The letter also made pathetic reference to the effect on Sir William Napier of the death of his brother Sir Charles in the previous year, and ended with words very memorable to me, and worthy to have closed the intercourse of two such friends. "The great men of "England seem to be passing away, those at least of "that great generation whose youth was kindled and "stirred by the first French Revolution. But one of "them remains, my friend Walter Landor, and may "he still remain as long as his spirit is not too im-"patient to escape from the decay of the body. It is "perhaps well that the influence which first moved you "to the resentment of injustice should be with you to "the end." (Landor had sent him a new Conversation having for its subject the politics of the day.) "There "are still so many painful things in the actual state "of the world, so much wrong and so much folly, that "it may probably be the duty of those who see these "evils clearly, and feel the mischief of them strongly, "to do all they can to expose and redress them. But "it is the very pressure of such evils that makes *me* "desire more earnestly to be borne away from them

" by some of those visions of beauty and tenderness " which you in former times raised up for me, or by " more of that intercourse with sages and heroes which " led me not to the treasures of antiquity alone, but " to those that lie in our own native speech. The " Greek and Roman dialogues you have printed sepa- " rately; but I have always had a strong wish to see " a selection made of the more purely poetical and " dramatic dialogues, including almost all in which " there are female speakers. It would be one of the " most beautiful books in the language, or, what is " the same thing, in the world."

Hare survived only until the middle of January 1855. He had been again a prisoner from illness for a month, but nothing immediately dangerous was apprehended; when suddenly he grew rapidly worse, and died on the morning of Tuesday the 23d in his sixtieth year. From one of the mourners at his deathbed Landor heard the sad intelligence, in a letter written two days later. "How often your friend spoke of you. *Dear* " *Landor!* he used to say; *I hope we shall meet once* " *more.* Yes, but not on earth." It was to this Landor referred in lines sent to me on the 27th. "I sit " up in bed to write what pressed upon me this morn- " ing. Poor Julius was hardly sixty. In three days " I shall enter on my eighty-first year. Superfluous " lags the veteran on the stage. I am outliving all my " friends, and it is time for me to go and join those " who are gone before me. Already memory and " strength are gone, and surely my days are num- " bered.

> Julius! how many hours have we
> Spent with the sage and bard of old!
> In wisdom none surpassing thee,
> In truth's bright armour none more bold.

By friends around thy bed in death
My name from those pure lips was heard.
O Fame! how feebler all thy breath
Than Virtue's one expiring word!"

Towards the close of the same year, too, he lost a friend for whom he had a thoroughly genuine admiration and regard. "I am grieving, and shall grieve "long," he wrote to me (25th October 1855), "for "Sir William Molesworth. When, on that desart "heath the house of commons, will three such men "for honest and useful work, as himself and Hume "and Peel, ever meet again? Poor Sir William! The "last time we met was at Pencarrow. We started a "*stote* near the pool, and both ran after it, might and "main. I ran faster than stote or baronet; but the "creature must have been bred on whig land, for he "doubled, and fairly escaped us."

The following year brought a much graver loss, and the name with which my melancholy list must close is that of one very dear to us both. The good, joyous, generous Kenyon died in December 1856, thinking of his friends to the last; and finding it his happiness in death, as it had been through life, to provide for the welfare and enjoyment of all who had ever been associated with enjoyments of his own. "This indeed "is a sad grief," Landor wrote to me, "after a quarter "of a century's friendship. He was the kindest, the "most genial of men, ever known to me. I never "saw a cloud upon his face. There was not a word "he uttered, not a letter he wrote, that did not carry "on its surface some ray of light from the happiness "he was spreading around him."

Yet why should I scruple to add another name? Landor had lost in this year also the little Pomeranian

dog who had been for more than twelve years his constant and sprightly companion. "Pomero, dear Pomero "died this evening" (10th March 1856) "at about four "o'clock. I have been able to think of nothing else." "Everybody in this house," he wrote a few days later, "grieves for Pomero. The cat lies day and night upon "his grave; and I will not disturb the kind creature, "though I want to plant some violets upon it, and to "have his epitaph placed around his little urn.

O urna! nunquam sis tuo eruta hortulo:
Cor intus est fidele, nam cor est canis.
Vale, hortule! æternumque, Pomero! vale.
Sed, si datur, nostri memor."

## XII. Fruits gathered from an Old Tree.

To a republication in 1853 of Conversations, Critical Essays, Poems, and Miscellaneous Prose Pieces, all of which had been written, with few exceptions, in the interval of seven years since the collection of his Works, Landor gave the title of *Last Fruit off an Old Tree;* and allusion has already been made to such of it as consisted of new Conversations, or of critical studies on Theocritus, Catullus, and Petrarch. It remains, however, generally to speak of its other contents, and to bring under the same pretty and pathetic title, to which it more strictly applies, the yield of still later fruit from the old tree; or, in other words, such additions to Landor's writings as were either published, or collected with a view to publication, under the titles respectively of *Scenes for a Study*, *Dry Sticks*, and *Hellenics Enlarged*, before he finally departed for Italy in 1858.

The principal prose pieces of the *Last Fruit*, apart from its reviews, were nineteen chapters on "Popery

" British and Foreign," and ten letters of a true believer to Cardinal Wiseman, laughing at the public alarm in 1850 over papal aggression, and condemning more gravely the legislation that followed. "As if fifty " cardinals in England," he wrote to me (and the remark will sufficiently describe his view of the case), " could do us damage to the amount of five farthings!" The high-church view in either communion, protestant or popish, had nevertheless small comfort or support from him. In the course of his chapters there is an eloquent passage on the services of Methodism in reclaiming, at a critical time, the most profligate of the people from turbulence and crime. On one side is the gentle and virtuous Wesley, bringing about him as great multitudes as ever surrounded the earlier apostles, and working as great marvels in their hearts; while on the other are the beneficed clergy everywhere setting their faces against him, "and angry faces they are, partly " from old prejudices, and partly from old port." In another chapter there is masterly ridicule of any argument against extravagant sacerdotal pretensions drawn from our modern enlightenment and learning: the enlightenment represented by a few altar-candles extinguishable at pleasure, and as for the learning!—"Learning was " never so highly cultivated in Italy as when Muretus " delivered an oration eulogistic of Catherine de' Medici " in celebration of the massacre on St. Bartholomew's " day. Give the same priests the same power, and no- " thing will be wanting *but latinity for the oration*." At nearly the time when these chapters were written, Landor had been corresponding about one of his Llanthony livings with the bishop of St. David's, for whose character and learning he had high respect; and he has some excellent remarks on the inadequacy of the pay-

ment of curates, which were probably suggested by that correspondence. His conclusion upon the whole matter is to counsel moderation on all sides; and this he enforces in language not undeserving of respect, though little likely to have hearing as matters stand at present. "It would grieve me to foresee a day when "our cathedrals and our churches shall be demolished "or desecrated; when the tones of the organ, when the "symphonies of Handel, shall no longer swell and rever- "berate along the groined roof and painted windows. "But let old superstitions crumble into dust; let faith, "hope, and charity, be simple in their attire; let few "and solemn words be spoken before Him to whom all "hearts are open, all desires known. Principalities "and powers belong not to the service of the Crucified, "and religion can never be pure, never of good report, "among those who usurp or covet them!"

A similar set of letters or chapters, written two years afterwards in the assumed character of an American, and dedicated with much admiration to Mr. Gladstone, had for their subject the outset of the Crimean war, which was sharply criticised. These were issued separately: but, collected in the same volume with those on Popery, were others calling attention to Southey's services in connection with the neglect of his family; and of these last the sequel may be worth relating.

They had been published in a paper I had long been connected with, and at that time conducted; not better known for its liberal opinions, than for the incomparable wit and ability which the friend whom I followed as its editor had associated with its name. Nor had only the letters been given. Comments had been made on the subject of them from time to time; and I had very strongly directed attention to the fact, that though a

tory administration was in power when Southey died and until three years after his death, his son was still suffered to languish on less than a hundred a-year, in the church of whose interests his father had been so zealous a champion. This was a duty that should hardly have been left to a journal differing so strongly from many of Southey's views; but it was nothing to what occurred a little later, when (if small things may be compared to great), with astonishment only equalled by Sydney Smith's at finding himself, an old Edinburgh reviewer, defending the church against archbishops and bishops, I found myself—the editor of a paper of what was then called extreme liberal opinions—defending Southey against the *Quarterly Review*. At this very time however, in January 1851, unexpected help came from another quarter. The whig chancellor, Lord Truro, resolved that Southey's son should have a chancery living; and as his interest in the case had been awakened by a newspaper, he made its editor, throughout, the channel of his kindness. Not disdaining to seek information where great officials are apt to turn away in fright lest they should find it, he applied privately for such suggestion as I could give on the subject that had attracted his notice: having thus satisfied himself that the living would be worthily bestowed, he made me the means of conveying it; and at the close of the month I handed over to Mr. Cuthbert Southey the presentation under the great seal to a rectory of the value of upwards of three hundred a-year, besides house and glebe. Even the fees had been paid by Lord Truro. The transaction altogether, I need hardly add, was a wonderful surprise as well as pleasure to Landor.

The most important of the poetical pieces in the

volume I am now noticing, were five dramatic scenes on a subject familiarised already to poetical readers by a very great genius. Landor had been much moved by the story of Beatrice Cenci, thinking it indeed the most deeply pathetic of any in the annals of the world. "When I was at Rome," he wrote to me in 1850, "I "visited frequently Lady Mary Deerhurst, afterwards "Lady Coventry; and yet more frequently I forgot the "object of my visit to palazzo Barberini, and turned "impulsively to the room containing the portrait of "Beatrice. Nothing else could fix my attention: my "heart rose violently with more than one emotion. Shel- "ley has shown great delicacy in overshadowing the "incest, but the violent language he gives to Beatrice "somewhat lowers her. Alas, alas, poor Cenci! she "never told her grief. Of this I am certain. In her "heart was the same heroism as that of Prometheus: "no torture could extort the dreadful secret: she would "have died without disclosing it. I had once an in- "clination myself to write a few scenes of this sad and "sacred drama."

Not only his inclination is expressed here, but the manner in which he intended to treat his theme; and very soon he was at work upon it. At first the scenes were not to be in verse, but the passion and imagination of a subject of this kind easily overflow the low banks of prose. The first three scenes show Cenci's character and home, and the last two exhibit his daughter's suf- ferings and death. Of Italian character, in its highest and lowest grades, a very singular and intimate know- ledge is displayed; and there is marvellous skill in re- vealing just enough, and only enough, to render a hor- rible story intelligible: but what is said by himself of the scenes is otherwise perfectly true, that "they inter-

" fere very little with Shelley's noble tragedy." When first sent to me they were inscribed to the memory of Beddoes, a man who wasted on wild and impracticable subjects a genius only second to the highest in tragic poetry. "In laying these scattered lines of mine," Landor wrote, "on the recently-closed grave of Beddoes, " *fungar inani munere;* but it is, if not a merit, at least " a somewhat of self-satisfaction, to be among the earli- " est, if among the humblest, in my oblation. Nearly " two centuries have elapsed since a work of the same " wealth of genius as *Death's Jest-Book* hath been given " to the world." This he replaced afterwards by a dedication to Miss Lynn, a lady for whose character and attainments he had an extreme admiration, whose books gave him high pleasure and enjoyment of the most unaffected kind, and from whose visits and correspondence he derived not a small portion of his happiness in these later years.

Of the other poems included in *Last Fruit*, or in the two later issues of *Dry Sticks* and *Hellenics Enlarged*, those that alone require present allusion from me are such as had any personal significance or interest. Some had formerly been printed in less perfect shape; a much larger number should never have been printed at all; a few, upon grave subjects, had his old exquisite grace of diction; and another few, even upon subjects almost too trivial to put into verse, were so good as to take rank with the best things of that sort to be found in books before book-making was. They are of what may be called the old style, in which he printed his first imitation of the manner of his favourite Latin poet.

> "Aurelius, sire of Hungrinesses!
> Thee thy old friend Catullus blesses,
> And sends thee six fine watercresses.

There are who would not think me quite
(Unless we were old friends) polite
To mention whom you should invite.

Look at them well; and turn it o'er
In your own mind . . I'd have but four . .
Lucullus, Cæsar, and two more."

Something of that style we may also discover in these little following pieces, where he sketches the popular Matho; where he gives a hint to his own critics; where he opens the world's theatre to us, at its three principal performances; or where he rebukes our good Kenyon for deserting his cottage at Wimbledon.

"Deep forests hide the stoutest oaks;
Hazels make sticks for market-folks;
He who comes soon to his estate
Dies poor; the rich heir is the late.
Sere ivy shaded Shakespeare's brow;
But Matho is a poet now."

---

"Wearers of rings and chains!
Pray do not take the pains
To set me right.
In vain my faults ye quote;
I write as others wrote
On Sunium's height."

---

"Alas, how soon the hours are over
Counted us out to play the lover!
And how much narrower is the stage
Allotted us to play the sage!
But when we play the fool, how wide
The theatre expands! beside
How long the audience sits before us!
How many prompters! what a chorus!

---

"Wimbledon has all charms for me!
Per Bacco, I would rather see,
Than all the crowds that crowd the gate
Before the greatest of the great,
The gander and the goose upon
Your little mere at Wimbledon."

Nor is it absent from such graver moods as I may illustrate by four other poems of equal brevity, in which, though with also equal simplicity and directness of expression, there is a tone half-soothing in the sadness, and a colouring as of autumn sunsets, rather soft and rich than sorrowful or mournful.

"How calm, O life, is thy decline!
Ah, it is only when the sun
His hot and headstrong course hath run,
Heaven's guiding stars serenely shine!"

---

"False are our dreams, or there are fields below
To which the weariest feet the swiftest go;
And there are bitter streams the wretched bless,
Before whose thirst they lose their bitterness.
'Tis hard to love! to unlove harder yet!
Not so to die—and then, perhaps, forget."

---

"The place where soon I think to lie
In its old creviced nook hard-by
Rears many a weed:
If parties bring you there, will you
Drop slily in a grain or two
Of wallflower seed?

I shall not see it, and (too sure!)
I shall not ever hear that your
Light step was there;
But the rich odour some fine day
Will, what I cannot do, repay
That little care."

---

"The grateful heart for all things blesses;
Not only joy, but grief endears:
I love you for your few caresses,
I love you for my many tears."

That last is very perfect. Nor less beautiful in its tenderness and delicacy, as well as very affecting for other reasons, is one of his many recollections of his earliest friend, his sister Elizabeth. Old age ever links to the present the most distant past; and here is the

schoolroom not seen for nearly eighty years, overshadowed by the still-unchanged cedar seen only yesterday. Here, too, are the works of charity and mercy that died with her, and his favourite plant that also withered when her loving care was withdrawn.*

"Is there a day or night
One when the vision of my earliest friend,
Robed in her own pure light,
Fails on my weary vigils to descend?

Sometimes she may appear
Before the expectant schoolroom when the chimes
Sing blithely '*dinner near*;'
And, in a darker sadder scene sometimes,

The lonely widow's door
Knows by long use what step is on the sill;
It opens, as before
Year after year! Pain flies, and moans are still.

And then to walks at home
From age's griefs and childhood's games we pass,
Where, gloom o'erhanging gloom,
The stern old cedar waves away the grass.

Thou too, my cistus, thou
Whose one-day flowers in my best books lie spread,
Deserted long ere now,
With none to prop thee, side by side, art dead."

Another only I may give of the very many that memories of her had suggested after her death: on some of the trees in the old Warwick garden.

"Cypress and Cedar! gracefulest of trees,
Friends of my boyhood! ye before the breeze,
As lofty lords before an eastern throne,
Bend the whole body, not the head alone."

Among these fruits too, the produce of old age thus gathered, there is not wanting, at times, an austerer flavour; and there was as yet no weakness in his voice when he uplifted it against tyranny or wrong. There

* See ante, pp. 429-30.

are few of his lines on Kossuth that have not the ring of the true metal. As in the descriptive touch of his passage of the desert after the Sultan had unlocked the gates for him.

> "Him when the sons of Ismael saw,
> The man who gave free men the law,
> They stopt the camel-train to gaze;
> For in the desart they had heard
> The miracles of Kossuth's word,
> The myriad voices of his praise."

Or where he thanks the Turk for having done that fearless deed of justice and humanity.

> "In vain two proud usurpers side by side,
> Meschid! would shake thy throne:
> Sit firm; these outlaws of the world deride,
> And fear thy God alone.
>
> The Merciful and Mighty, Wise and Just,
> Who lays the proud man low,
> Who raises up the fallen from the dust,
> And bids the captive go."

Belonging also to these latest years are several critical poems; and from one of them descriptive of contemporary poets, written in hexameters at the request of Hare, who had a strange liking for such ungainly intruders upon a language entirely unsuited to them, I take some lines on Wordsworth confirmatory of what was lately said as to Landor's final belief in regard to him.*

> "Wordsworth, well pleas'd with himself, cared little for modern or ancient,
> His was the moor and the tarn, the recess in the mountain, the woodland
> Scatter'd with trees far and wide, trees never too solemn or lofty,
> Never entangled with plants overrunning the villager's footpath.
> Equable was he and plain; and tho' wandering a little in wisdom
> Ever was English at heart. If his words were too many; if Fancy's
> Furniture lookt rather scant in a whitewashed and homely apartment;
> If in his rural designs there is sameness and tameness; if often
> Feebleness is there for breadth; if his pencil wants rounding and pointing;
> Few of this age or the last stand out on the like elevation.
> There is a sheepfold he rais'd which my memory loves to revisit,
> Sheepfold whose wall shall endure when there is not a stone of the palace."

* Ante, p. 418.

Another poem in the collection was addressed to his brother Robert, and is not now to be named without sorrowful addition. Both Landor's surviving brothers were living in the autumn of 1865, when this biography was begun; and at this Easter of 1869, when it approaches to its tardy completion, both are passed away. Henry died three years ago; and it is little more than three weeks since I stood at the grave which closed over Robert, the last of this family of remarkable men.* Without him the book could not have been written; he took a natural interest in what he had helped so much; and but for him I should hardly have persisted with it against many difficulties. To his writings, and to the extraordinary likeness between his genius and his brother's, many references have been made in the course of it; and what I may now permit myself to say of his character will be said least obtrusively in connection with this poem. One allusion in it, which had given him pain, I shall transcribe with his own marginal comment upon it, sent me at the time.

> "Thine is the care to keep our native springs
> Pure of pollution, clear of weeds; but thine
> Are also graver cares, with fortune blest
> Not above competence, with duties charged
> Which with more zeal and prudence none perform.
> There are who guide the erring, tend the sick,
> Nor frown the starving from a half-closed door;
> But none beside my brother, none beside,
> In stall thick-litter'd or on mitred throne,
> Gives the more needy all the Church gives him.
> Unaided, tho' years press and health declines,
> By aught of clerical or human aid,
> Thou servest God, and God's poor guests, alone."

---

* Charles Landor was in his seventy-third year, when he died of an illness rendered serious only by his too great confidence in his strength. Henry survived to his eighty-seventh year, Robert to his eighty-eighth, and Walter to his ninetieth.

"Few things of little consequence have ever given me so much mortification as this praise; the more painful because it was kindly intended. Neither my brother, nor any other person, ever heard me say what I had given to the poor. If I had given only 'all the Church gives me,' they would not have received, in sixty years, so much as sixpence. I never received a farthing from the Church in my life. The income arising from my living, which is less than the income arising from the 6,000*l.* my mother had previously given me to purchase it with, does not pay my curate and other such expenses. I lose 200*l.* a-year by being a clergyman. I am that much poorer than I should have been as a layman, after bringing my own private property into the Church; and what little I can spare for charity is from my other personal resources. It is not an uncommon case. The vicar of a parish adjoining mine, equally unaided, has spent 800*l.* in building one church, and 500*l.* in restoring another. But how could my brother have learnt my virtues but from me? and how can I escape the contempt which such boasting must provoke? I would rather be thought deserving of a halter for my rapacity than of commendations for charity claimed by myself."

What is implied in this remonstrance (addressed also at the time to his brother in almost the same words), not of independence, conscientiousness, and the sense of justice only, but of their never-failing accompaniment of self-denial, attended Mr. Landor through every part of his long life. At its outset, when an income placing him above want had been secured to him, he resigned his fellowship at Oxford because he believed such endowments to have been intended only for gentlemen or scholars who had no other sufficient means. At its close, and the close of his ministry in an establishment which had withheld from him all her worldly rewards, and for sixty years had accepted his labour unpaid even by labourers' hire, his only desire was, by such bequests as he could make on his death, to improve the church of his vicarage for its next successor. For all the forty years while incumbent of Birlingham, he was never,

for a single Sunday, absent from his parish, nor, until he had passed his eightieth year, absent even from his pulpit.* Yet, by the mere character of his accomplishments, to speak of nothing higher, society must have had for him all the charms which it rarely fails to yield to one fitted to shine in it. He had travelled in early life, had taken part in many public discussions as a writer in journals and reviews, was a really brilliant talker up to the year but one before he died, and had an amount as well as variety of knowledge of a quite uncommon kind. Nor was there anything he knew that he had not ready for use; and I remember how much he surprised me, in the last conversation I had with him, by his homely social pictures and illustrations of a period beyond all others least authentically known to us, which he had drawn, besides graver matters of higher importance, from the writings of the Fathers. He had

* I take some lines from a pleasing notice in a local paper (*Worcester Journal*, 13th February 1869), written by a gentleman who was for some time Mr. Landor's curate at Birlingham. 'Every 'individual in his parish had been christened or married by him, 'or came in some special manner under his cognisance. . . He received the appointment of Chaplain to the Prince Regent . . but 'he preferred to spend in the unobtrusive duties of a country clergyman his long unmarried life and his considerable private property. . . 'His one indulgence was the collecting of pictures by the old masters. . . His standard of clerical duty was not a low or self-indulgent one. He was in the practice of reading through the Bible 'in the Greek version every year; and on Christmas-day and Good-Friday, after full morning service and communion, he made a point 'of visiting and administering the sacrament to every sick or infirm 'person in his parish. It will be no matter of surprise, that though 'a few families in the place (one of them having position and wealth) 'were Dissenters, no chapel was ever built in it, no rivalry or opposition known. The rector's wishes were his people's law.' As I stood at his grave I saw few eyes that seemed dry among the entire parish of very old and very young, the poor and the well-to-do, who crowded around; and it had been the care of the great lady of the place to put all the children of his schools in mourning.

the quick gray eyes of his brother Walter; with wonderful resemblance to him in his voice, in a laugh as frequent and genial though less loud and prolonged, in modes of expressing himself, even in turns and tones of Warwickshire speech we may fancy Shakespeare himself to have had; but he was much taller, and had more refined and handsome features. Altogether he was a man, this quiet rector of a sequestered country parish, who by natural gifts as well as great acquirements might have been expected to make a figure in the world; but there was a wisdom also possessed by him which explains the life he preferred to live.

It was impossible for any man to be more sensitive on points of honour, but he had obligations to faith and duty higher than even this, and one allegiance which was always supreme. The object of one of his tragedies was to show, how, by a Christian, dishonour itself might be borne; and to him was expressed, in that, all human trial. Truth in the very smallest things he thought of equal importance as in the very greatest: and when another of his tragedies was obtaining unexpected success by having been ascribed to Lord Byron,* he insisted on being announced as its writer; just as, when his *Fawn of Sertorius* was universally ascribed to his brother, he at once had the error publicly corrected. He would have rejected with as infinite scorn any advantage to be purchased by silence as any gain to be got by a lie. He would rest in nothing that he did not think to be true; and it was the impregnability of his belief in the religion whose minister he was, that very early had made distasteful to him that kind of worldly success which he had seen for the most part to consist in adhering to the forms and giving up the substance as

* Ante, pp. 365-369.

well as guidance of Christianity. The drift of his noble romance of the *Fountain of Arethusa* is a comparison of the results of revelation in the modern world with those of reason in the ancient; and the end is to show that if the moral and religious institutions of men have become happier through divine illumination, so much the more feeble would seem to have become their ability to appreciate the benefit and profit by its splendour. The old world and the new are brought face to face; and the ancients, exerting the reason which was their unassisted guide, bring the moderns to the test of the Christianity they profess, to find their conduct in unceasing contradiction to their faith. Of the wit and philosophy with which that fine fancy is worked out, or of the splendour of imagination with which his tale of Sertorius is told in all its beauty, mystery, and tragedy, this is not the place to speak. But posterity will find these books, if it has time to attend to anything done in our day; in its gallery will be a place for both the brothers; and not far from the plinth that bears Walter Landor's name, will be that which is inscribed with the name of Robert Eyres Landor.

> We met them in the street and gave not way;
> When they were gone we lifted up both hands,
> And said to neighbours, *These were men indeed!*

Those lines, which are from *Scenes for a Study*, recall me to that work. It was the last of the poetical fruits, gathered on the eve of quitting England for ever, of which it was to be said (this being, as certainly, *not* applicable to all) that they had in them the true relish of the Hesperides gardens. "I will hope," Landor wrote to me in December 1855, "to send you on my birthday, when "I shall enter on my eighty-second year, some scenes for "the study. I write one day and correct the next, and

" some days do a little of both. The Muses, we hear, " are the daughters of Memory. In the nature and " course of things, the mother should go first. With " me it is so. But I doubt whether you will find the " young ladies looking so fresh and active as they should " do." The doubt was not justified. Rarely had anything better been done by this extraordinary old man than these dozen scenes in which he had told again the ancient story of the two gamblers in ambition and love who threw between them for the stake of the world. The place (excepting only of the last dialogue) is Egypt; the time, that of the victory of Actium; the principal incidents, the deaths of Antony and of Cleopatra, the murder of Cæsarion, son to Cleopatra and Julius Cæsar, and the capture of Lucius and Marcus, children of Cleopatra and Antony; and the leading peculiarity of the whole, great force and distinctness of character. The two triumvirs, victorious and vanquished, are as finely contrasted as their fortunes. The one, in his success, waiting and far-seeing, but crafty, selfish, and coldly and calmly treacherous; the other rougher in his adversity, with louder laugh and less tolerant speech, become less patient and more reckless, but largely generous and trustful still as well as proud and bold, Roman soldier and lover to the last. Octavius has a false friend in Dolabella, who unsuccessfully tries to undermine him; and Antony has a loyal adversary in Agrippa, the conqueror at Actium, who vainly tries to serve him: the one meant to be as typical of the new empire that is coming, as the other of the old republic that is gone. But this is done without strain. We are only conscious of it as of the contrasting influences of Egypt and of Rome, which are all the more strongly felt as the art of them is never obtruded. Rome herself seems dwarfed,

with her turbulent victories and deities, in the huge silent presence of those

"Mild Gods both arms upon their knees;"

and there is a very fine effect in the scene where the death of Antony is announced, and Octavius is at the summit of his triumph, when, from the poet who is his friend and fellow-captain, Cornelius Gallus, there falls upon him unexpectedly, like a cold blast from a sepulchre, elegiac verses on the mighty of the earth, to tell him they are only earth, and that death claims earth for its heritage. Not all I have thus described however is what most of all deserves remembrance in these fine Scenes. Undoubtedly their masterpiece is the character and death of Cæsarion. Everything beyond even poetic warrant in making this boy and his mother so young* is to be freely forgiven for the extraordinary beauty it imparts to the sketch. The lad has never left the side of Cleopatra and her women, but nevertheless he is the son of Julius; and his manly, almost martial confidence, displayed with all the feminine enjoyment of a nature

* I remonstrated with Landor on this point; and here was his reply. "I don't think the point so certain as you appear to think "it is. There were differences between Cleopatra and her brother "at the time when Julius Cæsar went into Egypt; and he settled "them on his arrival. She was carried up into his bedroom on a "man's shoulders in a coverlet. She and her brother were minors, "under tutelage. Eastern kings and queens are not minors after "twelve. At twelve girls are marriageable. I doubt if Cleopatra "was much above *thirteen* when Cæsarion was born; certainly not "*fourteen*. Now, it is easy to know at what time Antony came into "Egypt, and when he died." Unfortunately it is the very ease with which dates may be computed that overturns altogether Landor's theory. She was, I fear, as certainly born B.C. 69 as the battle of Actium was fought B.C. 30. The story of the coverlet is no more than a tradition preserved by Plutarch of the way in which she got herself carried into the chamber of Cæsar, whom she was bent on fascinating to her will, in the form of a bale of goods.

which is nothing without something it can trust to and love, has an enchanting effect. Cleopatra herself has such belief in it, and is so confident that in the presence of Romans the son of Cæsar will be safe; nay, she has such faith in his power, protected by his father's name, also to save even the sons of Antony; that she trusts him into his cousin's camp. This of course is fatal to Cæsarion; but the opportunity for the poet is a fine one, and the scene where the boy, betrayed and murdered, yet trusts and loves to the last the man who murders him, is as pathetic as anything ever written by Landor.

To this account, that the reader may to some extent judge whether the power to sustain so masterly a conception had been weakened by the strain of the poet's eighty-two years, I will add some illustrations from the Scenes themselves, now not easily obtainable by anyone.

I. CLEOPATRA CONSENTS TO DIE WITH ANTONY.

*Antony.* Generous, pious girl!
Daughter of Ptolemies! thou hast not won
A lower man than they. Thy name shall rise
Above the pyramids, above the stars;
Nations yet wild shall that name civilise,
And glorious poets shake their theatres
And stagger kings and emperors with applause.
*Cleopatra.* I was not born to die; but I was born
To leave the world with Antony, and will.
*Antony.* The greatest of all eastern kings died thus,
The greater than all eastern kings thus died.

---

II. MECÆNAS ADVISES OCTAVIUS.

*Mecænas.* All may be won, well handled; but the ear
Is not the thing to hold by. Show men gold,
Entangle them in Gallic turquoises,
Tie stubborn necks with ropes of blushing pearls,
Seat them on ivory from the realms of Ind,
Augur them consulates, pro-consulates,
Make their eyes widen into provinces,
And, gleaming further onward, tetrarchies.

*Octavius.* It strikes me now that we may offer Gallus
The prefecture of Egypt.
*Mecænas.* Sometime hence;
Better consult Agrippa.
*Octavius.* None more trusty.
Yet our Agrippa hath strange whims; he dotes
Upon old Rome, the Rome of matted beards
And of curt tunics; of old Rome's old laws
Worm-eaten long . . .

---

III. A Lover of Himself.

*Octavius.* I do not think, my Cilnius, thou hast felt
Love but for me; I never knew thee hate.
*Mecænas.* It is too troublesome; it rumples sleep,
It settles on the dishes of the feast,
It bites the fruit, it dips into the wine;
I'd rather let my enemy hate *me*
Than I hate him.

---

IV. What the Rome of Augustus is to be.

*Octavius.* I wish this country settled, us return'd.
Resolved am I to do what none hath done,
And only Julius ever purposed doing;
Resolved to render Rome, beneath my rule,
A second Alexandria. Corinth, Carthage,
One autumn saw in stubble; not a wreath
Enough to crown a capital was left,
Nor capital to crown its pillar, none;
But here behold what glorious edifices!
What palaces! what temples! what august
Kings! how unmoved is every countenance
Above the crowd! And so it was in life.
No other city in the world, from west
To east, seems built for rich and poor alike.
In Athens, Antioch, Miletus, Rhodes,
The richest Roman could not shelter him
Against the dog-star; here the poorest slave
Finds refuge under granite, here he sleeps
Noiseless, and when he wakens, dips his hand
Into the treasured waters of the Nile.
*Mecænas.* I wish, Octavius, thou wouldst carry hence
For thy own worship one of those mild Gods
Both arms upon the knees: 'tis time that all
Should imitate this posture.

---

V. A Poet-Soldier's Preferences.

*Octavius* (*to a Guard*). Call Gallus hither.
*Gallus.* Cæsar! what commands?
*Octavius.* I would intrust a legion, more than one,
To our friend Gallus: I would fix him here
In Egypt: none is abler to coerce
The turbulent.
*Gallus.* Let others flap their limbs
With lotus-leaves when Sirius flames above;
Give me the banks of Anio, where young Spring,
Who knows not half the names of her own flowers,
Looks into Summer's eyes and wakes him up
Alert, and laughs at him until he lifts
His rod of roses, and she runs away.
*Octavius.* And has that lovely queen no charms for thee?
*Gallus.* If truth be spoken of her, and it may,
Since she is powerless and deserted now,
Tho' more than thrice seven years have come and stolen
Day after day a leaf or two of bloom,
She has but changed her beauty; the soft tears
Fall, one would think, to make it spring afresh.

---

VI. Dolabella counsels Antony to surrender Cæsarion.

*Dolabella.* Create a generosity of soul
In one whom conquest now hath made secure;
Bid him put forth his power, it now is greater
Than any man's: consider what a friend
Cæsarion hath in Julius, all whose wounds
Will bleed afresh before the assembled tribes
On the imperial robe thy hands outspread
With its wide rents, for every God above
And every Roman upon earth to number.
*Antony.* Ah! those were days worth living o'er again.
* * * * * *
My Cleopatra! never will we part;
Thy son shall reign in Egypt.
*Dolabella.* Much I fear'd,
O Antony, thy rancour might prevail
Against thy prudence. Cæsar bears no rancour.
*Antony.* Too little is that heart for honest hatred.
The serpent the most venomous hath just
Enough of venom for one deadly wound;
He strikes but once, and then he glides away.

---

VII. ANTONY SPEAKS OF HIS FRIENDS TO AGRIPPA.

*Antony.* But many yet are left me, brave and true.
*Agrippa.* When Fortune hath deserted us, too late
Comes Valour, standing us in little stead.
They who would die for us are just the men
We should not push on death or throw away.
*Antony.* Too true! Octavius with his golden wand
Hath reacht from far some who defied his sword . . .
I have too long stood balancing the world
Not to know well its weight: of that frail crust
Friends are the lightest atoms.
*Agrippa.* Not so all.
*Antony.* I thought of Dolabella and the rest.

---

VIII. ANTONY'S LAST REQUEST TO AGRIPPA.

*Agrippa.* Thy gladness gladdens me,
Bursting so suddenly. What happy change!
*Antony.* Thou hast a little daughter, my old friend,
And I two little sons—I had at least—
Give her the better and the braver one,
When by thy care he comes to riper age.
*Agrippa.* O Antony! the changes of our earth
Are suddener and oftener than the moon's;
On hers we calculate, not so on ours,
But leave them in the hands of wilful Gods,
Inflexible, yet sometimes not malign.
*Antony.* They have done much for me, nor shall reproach
Against them pass my lips: I might have asked,
But never thought of asking, what desert
Was mine for half the blessings they bestow'd.
I will not question them why they have cast
My greatness and my happiness so low;
They have not taken from me their best gift,
A heart for ever open to my friends.

---

IX. CÆSARION.

*Octavius.* Agrippa, didst thou mark that comely boy?
*Agrippa.* I did indeed.
*Octavius.* There is, methinks, in him
A somewhat not unlike our common friend.
*Agrippa.* Unlike? There never was such similar
Expression. I remember Caius Julius
In youth, although my elder by some years;

Well I remember that high-vaulted brow,
Those eyes of eagle under it, those lips
At which the Senate and the people stood
Expectant for their portals to unclose;
Then speech, not womanly but manly sweet,
Came from them, and shed pleasure as the morn
Sheds light.

*Octavius.* The boy has too much confidence.

*Agrippa.* Not for his prototype. When he threw back
That hair, in hue like cinnamon, I thought
I saw great Julius tossing his . . .

---

X. AGRIPPA PLEADS TO MECÆNAS FOR CÆSARION.

*Agrippa.* My gentle Cilnius,
Do save this lad! Octavius is so calm,
I doubt he hath some evil in his breast
Against the only scion of the house,
The orphan child of Julius.

*Mecænas.* Think, Agrippa,
If there be safety where such scion is,
Safety for you and me.

*Agrippa.* The mother must
Adorn the triumph; but that boy would push
Rome, universal Rome, against the steeds
That should in ignominy bear along
The image of her Julius. Think; when Antony
Show'd but his vesture, sprang there not tears, swords,
Curses? and swept they not before them all
Who shared the parricide? If such result
Sprang from torn garment, what must from the sight
Of that fresh image which calls back again
The latest of the gods, and not the least,
Who nurtured every child within those walls,
And emptied into every mother's lap
Africa, Sicily, Sardinia, Gaul,
And this inheritance of mighty kings.
No such disgrace must fall on Cæsar's son.
Spare but the boy, and we are friends for ever.

---

XI. OCTAVIA INTERCEDES FOR ANTONY'S CHILDREN.

*Octavius.* Are children always children?

*Octavia.* O brother! brother! are men always men?
They are full-grown then only when grown up
Above their fears. Rome never yet stood safe;

Compass it round with friends and kindnesses,
And not with moats of blood. Remember Thebes:
The towers of Cadmus toppled, split asunder,
Crasht: in the shadow of her oleanders
The pure and placid Dirce still flows by.
What shatter'd to its base but cruelty
(Mother of crimes, all lesser than herself)
The house of Agamemnon, king of kings?

*Octavius.* Thou art not yet, Octavia, an old woman;
Tell not, I do beseech thee, such old tales.

*Octavia.* Hear later; hear what our own parents saw.
Where lies the seed of Sulla? Could the walls
Of his Prænestè shelter the young Marius,
Or subterranean passages provide
Escape? he stumbled through the gore his father
Had left in swamps on our Italian plains.
We have been taught these histories together,
Neither untrue nor profitless; few years
Have since gone by, can memory too have gone?
Ay, smile, Octavius! only let the smile
Be somewhat less disdainful.

*Octavius.* 'Tis unwise
To plant thy foot where Fortune's wheel runs on.

*Octavia.* I lack not wisdom utterly; my soul
Assures me wisdom is humanity;
And they who want it, wise as they may seem,
And confident in their own sight and strength,
Reach not the scope they aim at.
Worst of war
Is war of passion; best of peace is peace
Of mind, reposing on the watchful care
Daily and nightly of the household Gods.

These Scenes were in my hands three weeks before the day he had promised them to me, and were indeed published on that very day (30th January 1856); in a tract exactly resembling, as to size and price, that in which *Gebir* had appeared nearly sixty years before. That such attributes and powers of mind should so long have retained their freshness, that their unceasing exercise over so wide a space of time should have left them neither weakened nor strained, and that at its close this

most delicate of all intellectual fruit should exhibit nothing of the chill of more than fourscore winters, may hereafter be accounted one of the marvels of literature. Nor did it pass without notice at the time; not publicly, for the Scenes had small acceptance from the critics, but in quarters from which praise was more grateful. "What an undaunted soul before his eighty years," Mrs. Browning wrote to me (March 1856), after infinite praise of the Scenes, "and how good for all other "souls to contemplate! It is better than any treatise "on immortality!" "What a wonderful Landor he "is," was written by another hand in the same letter. "The eye is not dim, nor the natural force abated. "That is to live one's eighty years indeed. I wish, "if you have a way, you would express our veneration for what he is, has been, and we trust long "will be." Not that any undue confidence in this undimmed intellect ever blinded Landor to the sense of how near he stood to the inevitable presence; in these Scenes very frequently, and scattered over all his last fruit, is the lesson, not unwisely at any time enforced, of the tranquillity with which the rest of death may be waited for; he was ever ready to contemplate calmly in his own case what arises to the thought of Antony,

> I have been sitting longer at life's feast
> Than does me good; I will arise and go:

and for that especially Mr. Carlyle at this time thanked him. "You look into the eyes of Death withal, as the "brave all do habitually from an early period of their "course; and certainly one's heart answers to you. Yea, "valiant brother, yea, even so! There is a tone as of "the old Roman in these things which does me good, "and is very sad to me, and very noble."

Little more remains to be said of Landor's last literary labours in England. The old tree was to go on shedding fruit as long as there was life in trunk or bough, and the last was never to mean anything more than the latest. Of those under immediate notice the latest was the enlargement of his *Hellenics;* several new ones being added, and several of the old ones rewritten; but enough will have been said of it if I add that it had been especially his study, with advancing years, to give more and more of a severe and simple character to all his writing after the antique, and that this was exclusively the object, here, of the most part of his changes or additions. For this reason they deserve close attention. It was an old sagacious warning to a young writer, that if he should happen to observe in his writing at any time what appeared to him to be particularly fine, he would do well to strike it out; and, in revising those pieces on classical subjects, Landor was following the advice as implicitly after he had passed his eightieth year as if he had not reached his eighteenth. I remember a close he had put to the exquisite *Paris and Œnone* which I thought extremely striking. But no, he said; it ended the poem too much in a flash, which we below were fond of, but which those on the heights of antiquity, both in poetry and prose, avoided. And of course he was right.

The incidents that led to his final departure from England are now briefly to be named. But as in these latter years, when he had ceased to visit much, he had been deriving no inconsiderable enjoyment as well from the reading as from the writing of books, some notices of that kind of use of his leisure may have also some interest for the reader, and will here be properly interposed.

## XIII. Silent Companions.

All the recent years, as they passed, had found my old friend content with his few associates in Bath, and more and more indisposed to other society. He made exception only for that of his books, and here it became my privilege still to have part. There was rarely a week in which he did not write to me of some book as of a friend he had been talking with; and often so characteristically, that any account of this portion of his life would be incomplete which did not borrow illustration from these letters. Dialogues not imaginary I may call them, with but one listener until now; and the reader will have to judge if they were worthy of a larger audience. I will take a few of the subjects that thus occurred in our correspondence, some touched briefly, some at large; and in the order or connection, or absence of both, just as I received them.

To the first I shall name he had been attracted, by remembering that when Southey visited him at Como, in 1816, he mentioned Blanco White with much affection as the most interesting character he had left behind him in England. "But he never mentioned him "as the best dialectician and the most dispassionate reasoner. He rated less highly than I now perceive to be "his due both his abilities and the beauty of his language. I had always thought Whately his superior; "but I am converted to the side of Blanco, who unites "the graces of poetry and the refinements of criticism, "and superadds to both a passionate love of truth. He "is indeed the very opposite of a character on which "he discourses in one of the volumes; a man so fond "of lying that he lies to himself, as men sing to themselves who are fond of singing." The volumes were

the *Life and Letters of Blanco White*, and the more he read in them the higher his opinion became. They opened a California to him, he said, "all gold below, " and all salubrity above." This admiration did not surprise me. The book has always seemed to me to hold a high place among the few in our language of a biographical kind that have a purely and keenly intellectual interest; and Blanco himself was so uncommon a man, though the name is unfamiliar now, that the reader may thank me for prefacing what Landor has to say by a few words of my own.

It is nearly thirty years since Blanco White died, and for thirty years before that time there were few names better known than his in the society of London and Oxford. He was a Spaniard, born in the same year as Landor; his father of an Irish stock, settled in Seville, then the most bigoted town in Spain; and his mother an Andalusian so ardent for her church, that she dragged her son from his father's counting-house to turn him into an ecclesiastic. The career unhappily proved to be so conflicting with the character of his mind, that by the time he obtained rank as a priest, its unfavourable influences affected him with such keenness as to render flight his only escape from infidelity. He came to England in 1810, then so imperfectly acquainted with English that he had to support himself in London by setting up a Spanish newspaper; which he did by the kindness of Lord Holland. He rendered in this way much public service, up to the expulsion of the French from Spain in 1814; became gradually meanwhile a master of our language; lived very familiarly in Holland-house for a part of the time; and settled ultimately at Oxford, where he was no mean figure among even the extraordinary group of men who

then met in the common room of Oriel. He received from the university a mastership of arts, and was led to take English orders. These were his not least happy years. He corresponded with Southey and Coleridge, explained the Roman-catholic breviary to Pusey and Hurrell Froude, and delighted equally in Newman and Whately. But, tempted into controversy with members of his former communion, he threw himself overzealously into the strife, and shocked Lord Holland not a little by declaring in the *Quarterly* against catholic emancipation. Soon, however, the larger liberality of his nature re-asserted itself, and, upon the schism that made broad division in Oriel, he stood fast by Whately. He accompanied his friend to Dublin; was unhappily not strengthened in his new belief by what he saw of the Irish Establishment; and, shaken by his own doubts at the very time when he was hoping to settle the wavering faith of a unitarian, became unitarian himself. His sincerity no one could doubt. He proved it by the most painful sacrifices; nay, by what is entitled to be called even heroism, touching and noble. The real truth was that his ardent impulsive nature had never actually recovered the shock of its recoil from the jesuit discipline. What followed, in successive stages, was compromise; and compromises only last for a time. He did not remain in unitarianism. But to the very last he seems to me, in a certain construction of his mind, in its close union of the moral with the intellectual faculties, even in some of its weaknesses, but above all in its restless desire for truth, a nonconformist Doctor Arnold. Perhaps however he will be remembered longest for the extraordinary intellectual achievement of having so mastered our language, some time after he had passed middle life, as to have made it thoroughly his own. He literally recast his mind

in an English mould; after a few years never thought but in English; wrote an admirable English style, strong and simple; and is the author of an English sonnet called "Night and Death," of surpassing beauty of expression, and subtlety as well as grandeur of thought.

What first enchanted Landor, apart from the spiritual insight of this man or the force of reasoning and conviction in him, was the discovery in every part of his mind of sensitiveness and elegance carried almost to extrême. Here was continual protest against a style of all others the most odious, by which Landor in his time had seen havoc made of names that should have had nothing but honour; the style of the swaggering cut-and-slash critic, now gone much out of vogue, but whom I can well remember in a still rampant state when first I was connected with letters, disposing easily of all kinds of reputations, terrifying his readers into thinking him original by merely opening on them sluices of slang, and finding them more and more foolishly eager to wipe his shoes the dirtier and more slipshod he wore them.

"Is it not incredible that a Spaniard should be a critic? And yet in what review or magazine do you find remarks so perfectly just and delicate as those in vol. ii. p. 183? 'I ought 'however to have remembered that there is a set of very able 'men writing constantly as critics, whose principal fund of hum- 'our arises from the *roystering* (I use their own descriptive 'word), carousing, eating, and drinking spirits, which they take 'a pleasure to bring out before the public with the same kind of 'satisfaction as a set of half-drunken noblemen and their para- 'sites at Oxford would feel in showing the world what free- 'doms they can use with it. Their humorous writing is a kind 'of *row*. It is unquestionable that much of the 'talk' which 'you find, especially in ——, would be impertinent and coarse 'in refined company: how, then, can it be tolerable when ad- 'dressed to the public?' The purity and elevation of Blanco place him so utterly above the rabble of magazine men, that there is no chance that these admirable observations will correct

them. He will never *rain influence* on this hard clay and crackling stubble. I heartily wish that no gentleman at either of our Universities could take a bachelor's degree before he had been examined in this book. At present one side of a question is thought quite sufficient. Nobody seems to recollect the first words of the wise Epictetus, πᾶν τὸ κρῆμα δύας ἔχει λαβάς. If this is questionable, and I think it is, at least let it *be* questioned. Let all be said that can be said for and against what may interest any one, and more especially for and against what may interest a great portion of mankind."

Blanco's occasional errors in criticism belonged to the same character of refinement in his mind; as where he objects to Gil Blas, and thinks that Falstaff should have been made comfortable for the rest of his life. "Yes," says Landor, "if Shakespeare had been a novelist. But "Shakespeare was resolved on showing that the levity "and even the heartiness of princes is failing to their "favourites in the hour of need." And so of the objection to Le Sage's hero that he is a scoundrel. So he is; but the scoundrel we laugh at we should no more think of taking for imitation, than of taking into our service. "Show me any style in any language so "diversified, so easy, so graceful as Le Sage's. He "wanted the painter's eye, the poet's invention, fire, "and energy; but life had opened to him all its ex-"periences, and he carries round about him a perpe-"tual carnival, pelting incessantly at everybody, and "hurting none."

A large class of sayings in the book, arising out of, or reflecting, the doubts and misgivings that shook Blanco's mind in his later years, have expression in the next extract made from it:

"At p. 300 I find this: 'I have heard a man of great talents, 'and conscientious besides, speak of the immortality of the soul 'as if virtue were absolutely dependent upon it. But for the 'happy inconsistency which in such cases corrects the evil tend-

'encies of mischievous abstract principles, I would not give a 'straw for that man's virtue. Men who check their appetites 'upon speculation; who lay out their abstinence or moderation '(as they think) at a high interest, are most unsafe to deal with: 'for if, by some mistake or other, they were to believe that there 'was a cent-per-cent of happiness to be earned by a bold stroke, 'they would not hesitate a moment to sacrifice one half of man-'kind to their own private gain. The name of virtue is dese-'crated by its being given to that truly gross, though perfectly 'disguised, selfishness.' Was there ever anything, in even the sayings of Bacon, better or more wisely said than this?"

What follows on the Protestant Church Establishment in Ireland may in present circumstances be read with an interest surpassing Landor's:

"At p. 247 of the second volume we have these remarks on the Church Establishment in Ireland, where Blanco had lived so long with his friend Archbishop Whately: 'I have arrived 'at the conclusion that, were it not for the Irish Church Esta-'blishment, the indirect influence of English civilisation would 'have produced a tacit reformation on Irish Popery. I am indeed 'fully aware that the Romanist system is incapable of a real 'reform: for its principle, submission to a priesthood, is essenti-'ally wrong and mischievous. But, had it not been for the con-'stant irritation produced on both the priesthood and laity of 'Catholic Ireland by the political ascendency enjoyed and as-'serted by a small minority of Protestants, Irish Popery would 'by this time be but an empty name for all the efficient intellect 'of Ireland.' How true is all this page! how worthy of remembrance!"

My old friend here gets upon a favourite theme:

"It appears to me that you are perfectly right in preferring the idiom to the grammar, for idiom is not founded on grammar, but grammar on idiom. How would some of our fashionable writers stare if they could read Thucydides or Plato! The best authors had no authority before them. Pascal and Madame de Sévigné wrote before there was any French grammar, I believe; Demosthenes and Cicero before there was a Greek or a Latin one. Never in my life did I open, much less read, any of ours. This is among God's mercies to me. Blanco White, whom I continue to read with increasing interest, makes

the most just remarks upon our English style, in pp. 386 and 387 of the volumes edited by Thom. How admirably he himself writes in what is rapidly to us becoming a dead language, and is to him a foreign one! Honour to the women! I say with him. The French have no better author than Madame de Sévigné; we very few better than Mrs. Inchbald and Mrs. Barbauld. What is taken for the style of Addison is indeed not his style, but his temperament, his graceful mind, his easy humour, and, in the Vision of Mirza, a calm quiet genius borne upward by a warm but not a fiery imagination."

More and more the book delighted him as he read, more and more lucid seemed the depth of Blanco's thought:

"'It is remarkable' (vol. ii. p. 319) 'that when any man manifests strong convictions, especially if he does not share them 'with a party, he is said to have strong prejudices,' &c. Admirable the whole of this passage, showing how the world is divided between those who believe steadily by early habit and prejudice, and those who have no steady belief; so that he who has strong individual convictions, obtained by independent inquiry, is attacked by both. What a profound observation is this of Goethe's, quoted by Blanco! 'Time is infinitely long, and each 'day a vessel into which a great deal may be poured if we really 'desire to fill it' (p. 320). Certainly the man who said this was the wisest man of his time, as he was the most poetical. Drops hang from every work of Goethe's that I have seen of the very purest brightness, such as will never dry up nor fall. I can judge of them by translations only; but I admire much of his poetry and all his prose.—What a tender and beautiful notice (p. 325) of Mrs. Whately and her daughters! What a just remark is this on free institutions in such countries as Spain, Portugal, and Greece! 'Civil liberty is morally useful only inasmuch as 'it makes individuals respect themselves. When liberty does 'not produce this effect, it is mere license, its end anarchy, and, 'through anarchy, slavery. Despotism is then preferable to 'liberty; for despotism is at all events order. The difficulty 'of establishing free institutions in Spain, Portugal, Greece, 'arises from the total absence of any seed of that self-respect 'which liberty may indeed raise in a rude soul, but which it 'will never produce in a degraded one' (p. 330). As wisely says Blanco (p. 346) of political profligacy that it is the last sin

which men are likely to acknowledge as such, and renounce: and for myself I add, that were I a casuist or a jesuit, I would start a question whether a man who aspires to be prime minister is a patriot or a scoundrel. He must know that he becomes a liar, if never one before. He must lie both actively and passively; he must commit injustice by giving to the less worthy what he should have given to the more worthy. All this he does, he tells you, for his country. He does not give his life for it, as many Romans did; but he gives his soul, such as it is. Many thoughts crowd upon me here, but neither have I room for them, nor have you patience. Supreme power may be worth the anxieties of ambition; but a lofty mind could never condescend to bargain with the brokers in a house of commons, or endure to sit at a long dinner-table with such a gang of blackguards. Vol. ii. p. 19. 'The moral world presents upon the 'whole a most hideous and distorted appearance. But it hap-'pens here, as in some pictures. Looked at with the naked 'eye, they are a perfect mass of confusion; but the moment 'you look through a lens constructed to unite the scattered 'lines in a proper focus, they show regularity and even beauty. 'My favourite lens is a virtuous man: it brings into harmony 'the discordant parts of the moral world.' Philosophy and piety were never more beautifully blended than here; and a fine spirit of poetry pervades the whole."

Space is left for only one example more of this loving talk with a silent friend, and it shall be taken from the last of the letters Landor sent me about him:

"He has just remarks on our architects. In my own opinion every Englishman ought to be restrained, by act of parliament, from building anything above a pigsty. What has the present age to do with the Elizabethan? Have we so much light that a sixth of every window should be composed of stone and another sixth of lead? And must we, young and old, mount upon stools to look out of them? Architecture should be modified by the climate. We have Whitehall before our eyes, if indeed we have any eyes before Whitehall. Inigo Jones was one of our great glories. The arts will readily place him with Hogarth, Wilson, Wollett, Flaxman (the greatest man of all), and your friends Landseer, Stanfield, and Maclise. I think even Reynolds and Gainsborough may be proud of such companion-

ship. There is, by the way, something in the portraits of Gainsborough which I am disposed to think unrivalled in his time or since.—Blanco in a following page says truly: 'A quick and 'deep perception of the *beautiful* is of the utmost importance 'both for our virtue and our happiness.' And he adds, that he generally closes his day with Shakespeare. Poor Blanco! poor Blanco! I have now gone along with him through all his perplexities, all his bodily pains and mortal sorrows, and have left him at the gates of heaven. Hope has already thrown them wide for him, the Hope that never trembles. There is more goodness, as there is more knowledge and wisdom, in our days than in any past; but it is diffused among many: we find nowhere much concentrated; there is no man preëminent in sanctitude, none a half-head above the rest in genius. Again poor Blanco! If his genius was not indeed of the very highest order, his knowledge, his judgment, his disinterestedness, his many virtues, above all his noble conscientiousness, have left him hardly an equal upon earth."

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Of course Landor read with eager attention the volumes of *Southey's Life and Letters* as they successively appeared; but from his many letters referring to them only a very few extracts can be taken. They show how steady, on the whole, was his poetical faith that there have been four magic poets in the world, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton, and that we are still awaiting the Fifth Monarchy. The difficulty in the case is that this monarchy may already have come, or may come at any time hereafter, without our being aware of it, as in the case of the Jews with the Messiah.

"All yesterday and all this day" (8th January 1850) "I have been reading Southey's *Life and Letters*. . . . . If he had not spoken so favourably of my *Gebir*, I might venture to say that there had been no one, for a couple of centuries, so thoroughly conversant and well-informed in poetry, or so candid and impartial. Only Addison, with his gentle eyes, had lookt a little way into the glorious scenes of *Paradise;* for which he now lies upon Milton's bosom, the greatest of God's rewards. I have been reading once more Dante's *Paradiso*. There are most beautiful things

in it; much better than the best in *Paradise Regained*, and more of them. But never will I concede that he has written so grand a poem as *Paradise Lost;* no, nor any man else. The *Iliad* in comparison is Ida to the Andes. The odes of Pindar to Milton's lyrics, that is, the sonnets, Allegro, Penseroso, &c. are Epsom racecourse to the New Forest. I am not writing on my knees; that duty would be an incommodious one."

*Of Himself, as he appears in Southey's Letters.*

"Here I stand, brought to life by a dead man. Few people would ever have known that I had written poetry, if Southey had not given his word that a sort of poetry it really and truly was. I must have waited until Pindar and Æschylus had taken me between them, and until Milton had said, 'Commonwealth's 'man, we meet at last.' Well, I would rather meet him and Southey hereafter than any of them; though I know he will ask me why I have done so little. My answer will be, Because I wrote chiefly to occupy the vacant hour, caring not a straw for popularity, and little more for fame."

*Of the great Masters of our Language.* (March 1850.)

"Dear Southey, like Julius Hare, was fond of English hexameters, my abhorrence. As I see that word it makes me shudder; for what could I have written that Southey should believe I felt it for the gentle Spenser? I may have expressed abhorrence for his method, never for himself. Partly the dreariness of allegory, and partly the reduplication of similar sounds in the stanza, made me as incapable of reading a hundred or half hundred of them consecutively as of reading two hundred ten-syllable couplets. Never in my life could I perform that feat. He (Southey) represents me as thinking we had little poetry which was good for anything before Milton. Not so. *Othello* had agonised my heart before Milton had reacht my ear. For the best poetry, as for the best painters and statuary, we must be disciplined. I had read the *Iliad* twice over before I had well studied *Paradise Lost*. Then the hexameter, even Homer's, fell upon my ear as a ring of fine bells after a full organ. There are a few passages in Lucretius, a few in Catullus, and very many in Virgil, which it is delightful to read and repeat; but our heroic measure is fuller and more varied. Not only Milton has shown it, but Shakespeare too, as often as strong passion demanded it. Southey and Wordsworth have caught up the echo from a distance, and repeated the cadence in a feebler voice. It is impos-

sible for me to judge fairly of Shakespeare's satellites. I have not read, and never shall read, a tithe of their dramas, such is my abhorrence of dirty cut-throats and courtly drabs. Ben Jonson I have studied, principally for the purity of his English. Had it not been for him and Shakespeare, our language would have fallen into ruin. Hooker too lent his surpliced shoulder to its support, and Bacon brought some well-squared massy stones towards the edifice those masters were building. Southey also has contributed much to the glorious work."

*Of Southey and Cowper.*

"How could Southey praise such harsh sounds following one another so closely as in Lamb's line, 'calls strangers still'? What an ear-ache they have given me! Southey's heart protected his ear. He always found a little good poetry in much good feeling. I would have given Cowper a hundred pounds for permission to strike out half that number of verses from the *Task*. I hope he and Southey have met in heaven. Two such men have seldom met on earth. Who is worth the least of them? None among the living. I have been reading also lately" (April 1856) "the Life of Cowper for the fourth or fifth time. No author's life ever interested me so deeply. How sublime must have been the devotion of that man who could sacrifice the purest and tenderest love to gratitude! A sacrifice in his case of heart and soul, leaving Venus Urania for morose Saturn. Ah! why did she who loved Cowper ever love again? How could she?"

*Of William Gifford and other Mistakes.*

"I am reading" (July 1856) "another volume of Southey's Letters. What an invidious knave it shows Gifford to have been, and how much trouble he took to spoil Southey's reviews! This cobbler cut away so much of leather, The shoe would neither fit nor hold together. His tastes were detestable. He ought to have kept his nose eternally over Juvenal's full cesspool. Cumberland told me that, one morning when he called on his friend Lord Farnborough, at that time untitled but in office, he found Gifford and another hack in the ante-chamber. They were admitted to the minister, and soon dismist. He made an apology to Cumberland for detaining him, but said 'These fel-'lows must be attended to.' In fact they came for their pay, and got it. It disturbs me to find in Southey (vol. iii. p. 300) the word *rewrite*. I had thought it, and *reread*, the spawn infecting a

muddier and shallower water. Properly *re* should precede none but words of Latin origin, though there are a few exceptions of some date and authority. Our language is running downhill without a dragchain. Ben Jonson tried to put the pole between *can* and *not:* he was run over. We are now at *daresay:* where next? In the page which I have markt there is an observation on the 'besetting sin' of our government, which has been signally exemplified of late, 'a habit of leaving its foreign 'agents without instructions, for the sake of shifting off the 'responsibility.' I am entirely of his opinion also in regard to promotion by merit instead of seniority. It is a fraud. Merit is favour; no challenging it: seniority is ascertainable."

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*Of Tennyson's Maud.*

"I am delighted" (Aug. 1855) "with Tennyson's *Maud.* In this poem how much higher and fresher is his laurel than the clipt and stunted ones of the old gardeners in the same garden! Poetry and philosophy have rarely met so cordially before. I wish he had not written the Wellington ode. He is indeed a true poet. What other could have written this verse, worth many whole volumes: 'the breaking heart that will not break'? Infinite his tenderness, his thought, his imagination, the melody and softness as well as the strength and stateliness of his verse."

*Of Aubrey de Vere's Masque of Proserpine and of the Envy of Poets.*

"Have you the Masque of Proserpine? If not, I will lend you mine" (23d October 1848). "He has raised her not only up to earth again, but to heaven. It is delightful to find one figure who has escaped the hairdresser and the milliner. . . . I had written thus much last night, and am delighted to find in the *Examiner* this morning that poets or half-poets are imitating me in praising one another. I do not believe there is a grain of sincerity among all I know of the number; but the outside of the filbert looks just as well as if there were no grub within it. The most envious of them does not envy me more than I envy Aubrey de Vere; but Envy with me lowers her shoulder to let a Love mount upon it. These are indeed revolutionary times, when not only old forms of government, but old forms of poetry start up again. I can imagine Milton reading to Proserpine the beautiful *Masque*, and Proserpine saying in her simplicity, 'You have succeeded with me.'"

*Of Scott and Keats, our Prospero and Ariel.*

"I have been reading" (24 March 1850) "Scott's *Kenilworth*, and think I shall prefer it, on a second reading, either to the *Bride of Lammermoor* or my old favourite *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*. It appears to me now to be quite a fine epic. We ought to glory in such men as Scott. The Germans would; and so should we, if hatred of our neighbour were not the religion of authors, and warfare the practice of borderers. Keats is our Ariel of poetry, Scott our Prospero. The one commands, the other captivates: the one controls all the elements, the other tempers and enlivens them. And yet this wonderful creature Keats, who in his felicities of expression comes very often near to Shakespeare, has defects which his admirers do not seem to understand. Wordsworth called his ode to Pan a very pretty piece of paganism when my friend Charles Brown read it to him; but Keats was no more pagan than Wordsworth himself. Between you and me, the style of Keats is extremely far removed from the very boundaries of Greece. I wish someone had been near him when he printed his *Endymion*, to strike out, as ruthlessly as you would have done, all that amidst its opulence is capricious and disorderly. The truth is, and indeed I hardly know an exception to it, it is in Selection that we English are most deficient. We lay our hands upon all, and manage very badly our dependencies. A young poet should be bound apprentice to Pindar for three years, whether his business be the ode or anything else. He will find nothing in the workshop which he expected to find, but quite enough of highly-wrought tools and well-seasoned materials."

*Of Sydney and Bobus Smith.*

"Never was I more interested in any book than I am now" (26th of August 1855) "in reading the *Life of Sydney Smith*. The English language has had few such writers; happily there are flashes of wit flying yet over his grave. Curious that great men should so run in pairs: the two Napiers, the two Smiths, &c. Will they ever talk of the two Landors, myself and Robert? According to what appear to be the laws of nature and of society in regard to authors, I ought especially to hate Bobus and Sydney for beating me out and out: Bobus in Latin poetry, and Sydney in English prose. But Bobus has had no rival in Latin this 1800 years. You seem to place Jeffrey, Horner, Mackintosh, and Brougham more nearly on a level than I

should ever do. Of those qualities which they had in common, Sydney had greatly more than all those people put together; and how many more parts, both shining and solid, had his rich mind! Why do we, by the by, drop our good word *parts* for talents? Even talent*s* are dropt for talen*t*. To talk about a 'man of talent' is to talk like a fool."

*Of Sydney on Demosthenes and Plato: old Heresy.*

"Sydney Smith unluckily attributes wit to Demosthenes. Quinctilian very justly says, 'Non displicuisse ei jocos, sed definisse.' He takes up the tradition of Plato's *animation*. He is often grandiose, but never animated: deliberately I say *never*. I have read him carefully twice over. What other man has done the same of men now living? He moves wonder far oftener than admiration; and there is all the difference. Wonder is sudden and transient: admiration the reverse. I have pointed out forty or fifty gross faults in his language, and I could have added a dozen more. Demosthenes is *animated*, Milton is *animated;* Plato at best is but emphatical, and not often that. Even in language there are finer things in Bacon, things more imaginative and poetical. He is to Plato what a wrestler is to a rope-dancer, but very few men have a grasp capacious enough to comprehend his muscles. The hand more easily goes round the full rotundity of Plato's."

*A Preferment unsought.*

"In reading" (March 1855) "the third volume of Lady Blessington's *Life* I am surprised and confounded at a letter of the Duke of Wellington's. It appears that good Lady Blessington had asked him, as chancellor of Oxford, to nominate my brother Robert as provost of Worcester-college. I do not think Robert would have accepted the charge. He was established in his rectory of Birlingham, and might have risen to higher rank with less responsibility."

*Reading De Quincey on Serjeant Hill and Bishop Watson.*

"I am reading his *Essays and Recollections*" (Oct. 1854). "He does not tell his stories well. How few there are who can carry a story without dropping the best part of it! There is one he tells very badly which has carried my memory back nearly sixty years. It is that (p. 175) about the absent Serjeant Hill, who had managed, as he sat next a lady at dinner, to tuck into his fob, without being in the least degree conscious of it, all the

apron she wore except the strings, and was in ludicrous perturbation when she rose and said, 'Mr. Serjeant, I must sue 'you for a bill of divorce.' I remember it repeated at my father's table by old Counsellor Wheeler, who was present with his wife when it happened. De Quincey is stronger in his essays, and it seems to me he has seldom written better than in his remarks on your Goldsmith. But his account of Watson is rather amusing. Watson was made a hypocrite not by choice but by necessity: not that goddess Necessity whom Horace represents with the *clavi trabales*, but the blander with the *clavi episcopales*. Imagine him to yourself standing before Pitt and asking to be made *archbishop*. This he could do conscientiously; he had said *nolo episcopari*, he never had said *nolo archi-episcopari*. I can bring before my eyes the premier, bolt-upright, with his head steady and stiff upon his crane-like neck, and his hard gray eyes looking down the triangular declivity of his dawn-bright nose; and I can fancy his deep sonorous voice as he wishes my lord bishop a good day. 'Damn the fellow!' cries the bishop the moment the hall-door is shut behind him."

*Of some Novels.*

"I have been" (Aug. 1856) "cushioning my old head on the pillow of novels. What a delightful book is Bulwer's *Caxtons!* I have done him injustice, for I never thought he could have written such pure Saxon English as may be found here; and Sterne himself, whom he has chosen to imitate as to manner, is hardly better in the way of character. *Esmond*, too, is a novel that has surprised me. Never could I have believed that Thackeray, great as his abilities are, could have written so noble a story as *Esmond*. On your recommendation I have since been reading the whole of *Humphrey Clinker*. It seems to me that I must have read a part of it before. Every letter ends with a *rigmarole*, then much in fashion, and thought to be very graceful. By rigmarole I mean such a termination as this: 'It had like to have kindled the flames of discord in the family 'of yours always, &c.' A tail always curls round the back of the letter-writer, and sticks to his *sincerely*, &c. How would Cicero and Pliny and Trajan have laught at this circumbendibus! In the main however you are right about the book. It has abundant humour; and how admirable are such strokes as where the jailer's wife 'wishes there was such another good soul 'in every jail in England'! But I find it rather wearisome,

and stuffed with oddities of language. P. 191. 'I have no doubt ' but your parents will in a little time bring you into the world.' If the parents did not bring her into the world (one of them at least), I wonder who did? By the *world* he means society; as Young did in saying of the *God* Sleep, 'He, like the *world*, ' his ready visit pays' &c. card-case in hand. 'He lights on lids ' unsullied by a tear': but I warrant he squeezed one out. P. 175. ' Penetrated the *uttermost* recesses:' he means the *innermost*. 'Be- ' *tween* vanity, methodism, and love:' between is only for two, *by* and *twain*. 'Neither seen, heard, nor felt:' here again, *neither* applies to two, not more. You see I have been carrying the cross you laid upon my shoulders. I must now run to Dickens for refreshment. He is a never-failing resource; and what an astonishing genius he is!"

*Of the Edinburgh Review on his Hellenics.*

"You know with what feeling I read a review in the *Edinburgh* four years ago, and here is another which makes me proud of being reviewed by such a writer" (April 1850). "Yet I could not but smile at the imputation of *mannerism*. Whose manner? I resemble none of the ancients, and still less the moderns. My merits, if I have any at all, are variety and simplicity. Cowper is the only modern poet who is so little of a mannerist as I am; and even he has somewhat of it. A little of sweet bile rises up in his stomach from the crudity of his religion. I am obscure; this is too certain; everybody says it. But are Pindar and Æschylus less so? I am unable to guess what proportion of their poetry the best poets have cancelled. Wordsworth and Byron, and most now living, leave no traces of erasure: I wish they had. I have rejected quite as much as I have admitted, and some of it quite as good. Order and proportion always were my objects. My real strength, I believe, lies in the dramatic, and I think I could have composed a drama suitable for the stage, if I had willed it: but intricacy, called plot, undermines the solid structure of well-ordered poetry. There is nothing of it in the *Iliad*, or in Æschylus; once only in Sophocles is there much of it. The Spaniards are known for little else; and they brought over to England these instruments of mental torture in their poetical Armada. Only think that I am suspected of undervaluing Dante! The proportion of bad poetry to good in him is vast indeed; but never was man, excepting Shakespeare alone, so *intensely* a

poet. Another objection made to me, not in this, but another review I have been reading of my *Hellenics*, is that allusions may be found in them to modern men and events.* In ancient poets we find many such allusions, and wish for more. In Virgil the palace of Cæsar is the palace of Latinus: 'Arboribusque 'obtecta recessit.' And the most august praise ever conferred on man is conferred here '(*quis* deus incertum est) habitat deus.' But one thing is quite certain, and you know it well. I shall have as many readers as I desire to have in other times than ours. I shall dine late; but the dining-room will be well-lighted, the guests few and select. I neither am, nor ever shall be, popular. Such never was my ambition. Thousands of people, for centuries to come, will look up at the statues of the Duke of York, George III, Canning, Pitt, and others of that description; but in no centuries to come will fifty in any one generation feast their eyes in silent veneration on the marbles from the Parthenon."

*Of the Quarterly on Steele.* (1855.)

"I would rather have written what is here quoted from Steele than all the criticism and philosophy of all the Edinburgh Re-

* Such allusions, I need hardly remark, were common in his *Imaginary Conversations*, and in former pages I have noticed several. I will here add, for the reader's amusement, another to which my attention was drawn by himself on the occasion of Sir Charles Eastlake (in August 1852) having carried off his coat from my house in mistake for his own. "On my return from Spain an officer took my "greatcoat, as our friend Eastlake has done, and left me his. I "have mentioned this event in my Æschines and Phocion, together "with the address I put on the letter which I wrote to him at Ports-"mouth." The passage, which is placed in the mouth of Phocion, is worth quoting.

"Singularity, when it is natural, requires no apology; when affected, it is detestable. Such is that of our young people in bad handwriting. On my expedition to Byzantium, the city decreed that a cloak should be given me worth forty drachmas: and when I was about to return I folded it up carefully, in readiness for any service in which I might be employed hereafter. An officer, studious to imitate my neatness, packed up his in the same manner, not without the hope perhaps that I might remark it; and my servant, or his, on our return, mistook it. I sailed for Athens; he with a detachment for Heraclea; whence he wrote to me that he had sent my cloak, requesting his own by the first conveyance. The name was quite illegible, and the carrier, whoever he was, had pursued his road homeward. I directed it then, as the only safe way, if indeed there was any safe one, *to the officer who writes worst at Heraclea*."

viewers. What a good critic he was! I doubt if he has ever been surpassed. Somehow I cannot but connect Steele and Goldsmith, as I do Cowper and Southey. Of all our literary men, they interest me the most. . . . Dear good faulty Steele! The *Quarterly* was not sent to me before nine last night. I would not, I could not, go to bed until I had read it through. My eyes are the weaker for it this morning."

*Of the Dramatists of Elizabeth and James.*

"I have been reading what Lamb and Hazlitt say of these men, and trying vainly, once more, to read steadily some of their writings. I call them *circum-circa* Shakespearians, and find them to be as unlike as possible to Shakespeare. There is crudeness on one side of the fruit, and rottenness or overripeness on the other, in almost every one. A wineglassful of pure water for me, rather than a bucket of turbid: one scazon of Catullus rather than all the poetry of the Shakespearian age—beside Shakespeare's! Yet there are strong throbs in the breasts that heave in those tarnisht spangles, and there are crevices that let fresh air into those barns and brothels. But Shakespeare! who can speak of him! Antiquity fades away before him, and even Homer is but a shadow."

*After Reading some recent Poems.* (1856.)

"We are living in a poetical world where atoms are flying up and down: where explosions are incessant: where bright buttons and unthreaded epaulettes, and laces of pantaloons, and broken limbs in minute particles, are scattered through the air. Granular sparkles in profusion, but nowhere a cubic inch of solid poetry. I venture to say this to you: to others I am a sad dissembler, and put on my sweetest smiles and prettiest behaviour."

*Of Sir Cloudesley Shovel.*

"I was reading in the *Old Judge*, the other day, of Sir Cloudesley Shovel, and, while I remember it, I will repeat to you a story, a piece of biography, which only this very morning" (8th December 1854) "I heard through a Rochester man, whose father was formerly dean of Bath. There is, it appears, in Rochester-cathedral a monument to Sir Cloudesley. Long before his time an old gentleman named Cloudesley was an inhabitant of the city. He was a man of extensive charities, but kept only one servant, an old woman. Early one morning she

observed the scavenger (there was but one in the place) tearing up a bundle he had just shoveled out of the dirty, but dry, kennel. Curiosity kept her close by, until in another minute an infant was discovered fast asleep within it. 'Lord a' mercy!' cried the old maiden. 'What the devil is to be done with the brat?' exclaimed the scavenger. Mr. Cloudesley came down stairs, and saw housekeeper and scavenger in his hall in debate. He ordered the infant to be taken care of, made frequent visits to its nurse, had it schooled for a few years, and then sent it to sea. But the marrow of the story is yet lying in the bone. When the child was to be baptised, he would not be persuaded to let it be called Cloudesley. The scavenger was present: no information about the parentage. 'Odd!' said the old gentleman; 'we must divide it between us. You give Shovel, and I will give Cloudesley.'"

*A strange Story.* (1850.)

"This amusing book" (Mr. Halliburton's *Old Judge*) "reminds me of what actually happened in the life of an old acquaintance of mine, Sir Edwin Stanhope, who inherited the Duchess of Norfolk's estate at Home Lacy. He got drunk at Boston when he was a lieutenant, just before the American war. The '*Select Men*' of that puritanical port had him arrested thereon and sentenced to be flogged. Nine years afterwards he had command of a frigate on the same coast. Never was there a more polite man, or one who lookt more gentle. He called on the Select Men, formerly his judges, complimented them on the happy termination of hostilities, and himself on becoming a reformed man, entirely through their instrumentality. He could hardly hope that persons of their dignity would condescend to honour him on board his vessel by their company to dinner, and even in that case he should be able to express his gratitude but incompletely. They accepted his invitation. He received them most courteously, he treated them most splendidly, and a day of much enjoyment was passed. As the time approached for their departure, a servant entered the cabin and whispered to the Custos, the leader of the select, that a gentleman above desired urgently to speak to him. As soon as the justice appeared on deck, he was seized, stripped, tied up, and had a dozen lashes from the boatswain. Each of the others were severally summoned and similarly punished. After which they were set ashore, the anchor lifted, and the vessel put under way for Eng-

land. Stanhope was reprimanded and deprived of his ship as soon as the incident became known, and only by great interest was he permitted to continue in the service. He died an admiral not many years ago. Indeed I think he was an admiral when I first became acquainted with him, in the very beginning of this century. Interest in those days, even more scandalously than in ours, gave extremely young men commands. My cousin Sam Arden commanded a ship, and lost an arm, before he was two-and-twenty."

*Of the Apple of Discord: suggested by reading a Review.*

"I have been reading" (January 1851) "the notice of Southey; and it brought a reflection into my mind which I shall put into Hare's mouth in a Conversation I am writing. Here it is. 'Envy of preëminence is universal and everlasting. Little 'men, whenever they find an opportunity, follow the steps of 'greater in this dark declivity. The Apple of Discord was full-'grown soon after the Creation. It fell between the two first 'brothers in the garden of Eden: it fell between two later 'on the plain of Thebes. Narrow was the interval, when again 'it gleamed portentously on the short grass of Ida. It rolled 'into the palace of Pella, dividing Philip and "Philip's godlike 'son:" it followed that insatiable youth to the extremities of 'his conquests, and even to his sepulchre; then it broke the in-'vincible phalanx and scattered the captains wide apart. It lay 'in the gates of Carthage, so that they could not close against 'the enemy: it lay between the generous and agnate families 'of Scipio and Gracchus. Marius and Sulla, Julius and Pom-'peius, Octavius and Antonius, were not the last who experi-'enced its fatal malignity. King imprisoned king, emperor 'stabbed emperor, pope poisoned pope, contending for God's 'vicegereney. The roll-call of their names, with a cross against 'each, is rotting in the lumber-rooms of history.' Perhaps you may think this too grave. Well, then, here is something lighter for you, touching upon the same subject.

Poets hate poets the world over.
Wisely will Clio's favour'd lover
Keep to the woods, nor dream of clover.

Rash, rash, to offer such advice!
Did ever housewife teach the mice
To keep from sugar and from rice?

'Tennyson.' True; *him* none can hate,
Yet all are envious of his state
And wish he were not quite so great."

*Of Mrs. Barbauld on Collins.* (8 July 1851.)

"I have lately been reading an edition of Collins, with notes by Mrs. Barbauld. Some of them are just; others are unsatisfactory and even absurd. Of his best poem, his ode to Evening, she says it will 'probably be considered rather as a literary 'curiosity than as a *successful pattern* of a new mode of versifi-'cation.' She had forgotten Milton's translation of Horace's ode to Pyrrha. Her remarks on blank verse are miserably feeble. She says, 'we may venture to pronounce it far from probable 'that the mode in which the great masters of English versifica-'tion from Pope to Darwin' (she forgets Dryden here, as she had forgotten Milton before) 'wrote, should be discovered to be the 'offspring of tasteless caprice or the blind compliance with un-'meaning custom. Our common blank verse is so extremely easy 'to compose that it tempts a young author to negligence.' The *negligence* of young authors or old ones offers no argument on either side. Italian rhymes are *extremely easy to compose*, and both young authors and old ones have been negligent about it; but we can read Ariosto and Tasso and Dante. Our Milton in his blank verse is much less negligent than in his rhymed; he has rejected rhyme in his *Lycidas*, as Tasso had done in his *Pastor Fido;* and so far from either of these poems being the less harmonious for the omission, no rhymed poem in any language is half so harmonious as either. Blank verse in some of our later popular poets may be diffuse: so much greater is the merit of those who have screwed up the chords of their instrument. In their high festivals the sweet wine is poured out for the ladies: men sit around the austerer of ancient vintages."

*Of Cobbett's Register, and other Newspapers, in* 1808.

"I have found my three letters to Riguelme,* who commanded the third division of the Gallician army when I went out to Spain; and I send you the passage from the second of them that you wished to see. It was written from Bilbao on the 22d of September 1808. 'It surprises me extremely,

* See ante, i. 239. The reader will be amused by observing the remark about Livy, and recollecting what was said by Mr. Cobden of the *Times* and Thucydides.

'that so few of our newspapers have been yet translated into 'your language; and that you should require from *me* the 'sentiments, real or reputed, of individuals high in office. No 'form of history can draw characters to the life and at full 'length so perfectly as these newspapers. Even the most stu- 'pid among them detail the speeches delivered by the principal 'members of our parliament, fairly and impartially. Perhaps 'in proportion to their deficiency of shrewdness and minuteness '—in proportion as they distrust their ingenuity and aptitude 'at investigating the origin of events—they exhibit clearly 'and broadly our sentiments and feelings. Those which aspire 'to more literary distinction are usually in the interests of a 'party; and hence especially you may collect the arguments 'by which government is defended or assailed. By reading 'these in the coffee-houses or in their families, and by con- 'versing long after dinner with perfect freedom, Englishmen 'acquire more general knowledge, more propriety and power 'of argument, than any other people. It has been asserted 'that we have no constitution, because it has not been in every 'part defined. You might as easily hope to persuade a man 'of landed property that he has no estate, because he has not 'a map of it. But to confess the truth, as our wealth lies 'chiefly in public credit, so our constitution rests principally 'on the national good sense. They tell us we have no repre- 'sentation. But if the king were to impose an arbitrary tax, 'or to continue one against the reclamations of the people, 'he would cease to reign. A paper is published by a man 'named Cobbett, so remarkable for its vigour of style, for 'its boldness of disquisition and originality of thought, that 'it may be said in some measure to control the ministry 'and dictate to the opposition. He favours your cause: and 'a single man of genius is greater, not only in the eye of God, 'of reason, and of posterity, but, by controlling and directing 'the public mind, is actually more potent, than three dozen 'princes. I wish I could collect, from their earliest date, a 'series of newspapers. It would be better to possess it than 'the lost books of Livy. Hopes, fears, and surmises—the 'growth, the gradations, the vicissitudes of opinion—assume 'the most interesting forms, the most vivid and natural colours, 'appear in their proper time, and occupy their proper place. 'The court is thrown open; the people pass to and fro with all 'their humours; the courtiers are discovered in their various

' trimmings ; the insects are classed and labelled and pinned to ' the very leaf. History hopes to confer a greater durability ' by giving lines and light where nature has given none.' "

*Of Swift's Tale of a Tub.* (1858.)

"I am reading once more" (he was now 83 years of age) "the work I have read oftener than any other prose work in our language. I cannot bring to my recollection the number of copies I have given away, chiefly to young catholic ladies. I really believe I converted one by it unintentionally. What a writer ! not the most imaginative or the most simple, not Bacon or Goldsmith, had the power of saying more forcibly or completely whatever he meant to say !"

*Of Shelley and Himself.*

"I have been looking" (26 April 1858) "into the life of Shelley. I could not help smiling at Shelley's praise of me, and at his Hogg's tossing up *Gebir* into the fire.* Poor Shelley got into a scrape about me with Byron. Yet, ardent as he was in my favour, I refused his proffered visit. His conduct towards his first wife had made me distrustful of him. Yet, with perhaps the single exception of Burns, he and Keats were inspired with a stronger spirit of poetry than any other poets since Milton. I sometimes fancy that Elizabeth Barrett Browning comes next. But I must confess I turn more frequently to Goldsmith. A very little of what is strange estranges me. I hate new dresses, though they fit close. Never tell me again of any one who either praises or dispraises me. I know what I am. Shelley and Southey knew it also. When poets extol a poet, be sure it is not too highly."

*Of Sir Robert Peel's posthumous Memoir.* (1853.)

"I am reading Peel's Memoir. I think him the wisest politician since Walpole. Shall we ever have a third Sir Robert ? This second of them knew business better, and had a finer scent,

* See ante, i. 114, and also ii. 176 note. It was my intention, when the latter note was written, to have made allusion to the effect produced on Landor by a detailed narrative (I found it among his papers) of all the circumstances of Shelley's first marriage, and its disastrous issue, communicated from a source unhappily only too authentic. Later reflection has however convinced me that no good can now be done by reviving a subject so inexpressibly painful.

than any other of either pack, foxhound or beagle. He starts the old question, Is fame worth having? No, say I; but we are born with an appetite for it, and at worst there is no great harm in its indulgence. It is certainly well that statesmen should desire it. Many grave men, and most politicians, think of fame as Castlereagh did, and aim only at the expedients of the hour. Entertaining no passion for glory, he looked at the future with indifference, and, armed against himself, he leapt across its boundary-line. After all, unless we deem posthumous glory a promise made in earnest to our labours and aspirations, nothing is there true and real beyond the immediate grasp of our fingers. It is impossible that a great man should be contented with the greatness which a less man can confer, or that a prudent one should think the best fortune consists in a life-annuity. Nothing is less selfish than a desire of fame, since its only sure acquisition is by labouring for others. And yet I will still add, for myself, that I care not for it: though the good Southey went so far as to say that literary fame was the only fame of which a wise man ought to be ambitious. Whatever works of imagination I have composed might have perished the next hour without a regret. My pleasure was in the conception and formation: excitement, not hope, interior glory, not external, animated and sustained me. True indeed is what you have often told me, that I shall have to wait long before I get my higher audience, and rule over the See appointed for me. My indifference about it is therefore fortunate for me; and being so, to this effect I give you my benediction, and pray God to have you in his holy keeping, WALTER EPISCOPUS."

The remark as to fame there quoted from Southey was one of the points made by the *Quarterly Review* against him in the paper referred to in the last section. It is only half given by Landor, the entire passage standing thus: "Literary fame is the only fame of "which a wise man ought to be ambitious, because "it is the only lasting and living fame." This the reviewer turned into a declaration by Southey of his belief that literature is "by far the grandest object of "human concern," and laughed at him for having expressed such an opinion. Southey did not say so, but

gave his reason for thinking that literary fame was the only fame of which a wise man ought to be ambitious. And is it so, or is it not? What is the fame that the majority of sensible men perceive to be the most durable? Would the reviewer himself have chosen to be Augustus or Horace? Is the fame of Elizabeth or Essex preferable to that of Shakespeare or Bacon? Who now would not rather have been De Foe than the statesman who put him in the pillory? Is it Johnson or Lord Chesterfield who at present stands waiting in the anteroom? Southey's proposition is as surely right and indisputable as the reviewer's construction of it is very far from either. A man who rightly values literary fame does not value it for the empty and noisy applause it reverberates, but for the solid and silent good it represents. The notion that literature is by far the grandest object of human concern, which is the expression of the reviewer, is a very different thing from the belief, which was that of Southey, that the grandest objects of human concern can have no promoter so effectual as literature, nor any monument so enduring. To such a man literature is the means, and not the object or the end. Milton had no thought of personal vanity when he spoke of the perpetuity of praise which God and good men had consented should be the reward of those whose published labours had advanced the good of mankind. Great writers who understand their vocation are entitled to speak as the world's unacknowledged legislators; and even the reviewer has to admit, of Southey, that he gave the first effective impulse to not a few of the most marked ameliorations of recent years.

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On the subject of orthography and language, supremely Landor's favourite, which he kept steadily before

him in all his reading, and which entered very largely into almost all his letters in later life, I have not thought it necessary to add many illustrations to the remarks on a former page.* But some farther allusions to it may be not unamusing, and they will show his whimsical resentment when anything like comparison was irreverently made between his and the phonetic style of spelling. Of the latter, Bath was in some sort the head-quarters at this time, its most intelligent advocate residing there; and Hartley Coleridge had this much excuse for a statement he made that Landor had become a convert to "this foolery." But it was about as well founded as Landor's reply that there were not three words in all his proposed new spellings unauthorised in their formation. "I appeal to Ben Jonson. He is a magistrate "in language, and I only wish a few of our street-"walking ladies and gentlemen were brought before "him, and obliged to undergo his sentence." I have already sufficiently shown that this appeal would not have availed my old friend much, and that with all his toil and pains he has gone but a little way towards the correction of anomalies very gravely disconcerting to foreigners as well as to all intelligent Englishmen; but it was nevertheless this firm belief that in the changes he proposed he was only restoring the legitimate forms of the language, added to his knowledge of English literature, and guided by his unusual mastery of the ancient as well as of many modern tongues, which enabled him, even while arguing for the maintenance of principles and positions the most unstable and untenable, to make sound and important contributions in aid of what he so much desired. The language is indebted to him for suggestions of the greatest value; and the character of

* See ante, pp. 60–66.

them is intimated more or less in such passages as I am now about to quote from his letters, especially in those having reference to the system of spelling after sound, or of so remodelling orthography that it should follow pronunciation.

*Of Grote's History.*

"I am reading" (October 1852) "Grote's History. Wonderful it seems to me that a writer so fresh from the Attic, and particularly so conversant with Thucydides, should stand up to his chin among the greengrocery of Covent-garden! It would however be ungrateful to collect blemishes of language from an author to whom we are indebted for so much diligence and information, so much learning and wisdom. The days of pure English were over with Southey, bright as they had been with Sterne, Goldsmith, and Mrs. Inchbald. We now break loose and get among 'ambitions' and 'peoples,' and many other such formidable features, repulsive as those which Æneas met on entering the gates of hell. But everybody now is playing with these frightful cobras, and putting them into his bosom. As people do not perceive the loss of freedom until it is utterly gone, neither do they the loss of language: nor would they be persuaded though such a prophet as Milton rose from the dead."

*Of Parts of Speech.*

"I have been reading" (1853) "a clever book, *A Month in the Camp before Sebastopol*, and would have given five pounds rather than have discovered in it such a word as *traps*. Surely this word ought to signify only the instruments of ratcatchers, molecatchers, and suchlike. Alas that we are sunk into the sludge of slang up to the very chin! I did think we never could sink lower after we had *discussed* a dinner with the undergraduates. How the gravy flew about! and do not you sigh over the stains of soup and of lobster-sauce on your velvet waistcoat? I beg pardon: there is no such habiliment in modern use: *vest* is the name. I still wear *breeches:* no other man alive dares to appear in them: there are inexpressibles, unmentionables, pantaloons, continuations, shorts, and probably several more in the same department of wardrobe. We certainly are in these matters the most vulgar nation upon earth, excepting the Americans, who are our *continuations*. And how poor we must be! We run to borrow a shirt from a French-

man, calling it a *chemise;* and the lady we love takes refuge in the same quarter for what lies nearest to her heart, and gives it the same name. Whatever is graceful, and whatever is disgraceful, we borrow from our neighbour; and keep for ourselves that only which lies between, and comes into ordinary and homely use."

*Of Corruptions of Language.*

"Here is a gentleman at Bath, Mr. Ellis, an excellent and most intelligent man, I hear, who has published a book recommending us to spell phonetically. Elphinstone, seventy or eighty years ago, wrote in this fashion. Imagine my surprise at being told that a work was composed on my principles of spelling. All my principles are merely the adoption of the best spellings of the best writers, and the rejection of the fopperies introduced with Charles the Second. The cavaliers (as fops were called) wished to make the ladies believe that they or their fathers had emigrated to France, and thought it as glorious to be unruly in their language as in their conduct. Cowley and Dryden were courtiers. Pope hated kings, who really were hateful; but he imitated the spelling of ladies, beautiful as his language is; and before he died he had read and ridiculed Middleton, some of whose peculiarities, good and bad, I also have noted. For several years subsequently there were but few innovations. People threw into the lumber-room their old bandy-legged chairs, and would have nothing that was not stuffed with Latin and quilted into stiffness. It was hardly to be expected that dons and doctors would go into a dame's-school; but Mrs. Inchbald and Mrs. Barbauld made themselves greater authorities than all Oxford and Cambridge. We have rarely had two better writers of English in the best of times. What I had in view when I began my letter is this. You have the power of a sanitary commissioner, and can command the stopping-up of several open sewers in our language. Do order that paling to be removed which shuts up *perhaps*, *indeed*, and *too* when *too* means *also*. This has no parallel in any other language; and even those who commit the folly would abstain from it in writing French or Italian or Greek or Latin. The last innovation is *every where* and *no where* in two words, as if *where* were a substantive. I find also *every body:* while *body* is inviolate. why should *everybody* be sawed asunder, like St. Bartholomew? I have now *said my say* and filled my sheet; so adieu."

*Of his own proposed Amendments.*

"I have read attentively" (1854) "Mr. Ellis's observations on orthography. Different authors have given different reasons for varieties. Southey told me when he visited me at Clifton, now some twenty years since, that it would ruin him to spell right, for that fifty copies of his book would never sell. Archdeacon Hare, not inferior to Archbishop Whately in purity of style and correctness of thought, had the courage to follow my preterites and participles and other words. In my *Last Fruits off an Old Tree* I have added high authorities; in fact I never have spelt differently from the ladies and gentlemen now flourishing without high authority or strict analogy. Our language was first corrupted by the *euphuists:* it had reached perfection under the compilers of our Church-service. It fell prostrate in the slipperiness and filth about Charles II, when every gentleman wisht it to be thought that he had been an exile for his adherence to royalty so long as to have forgotten his mother tongue. Cowley and Dryden, and South himself, were rudely slovenly. The sublime sanctity of Milton was as pure in utterance as in thought; he never was seized by the private influenza, he never went into places where it could be caught. Spenser, Bacon, Raleigh, Algernon Sydney, and De Foe, are leaders 'sermone pedestri;' but they varied in the spelling of several words. The French were no less ambitious of polishing their language than their manners. Montaigne and Charron had been contented with simplicity; Madame de Sévigné and Menage added grace; but what even these had failed to supply came with Voltaire. Français the king was separated, as kings usually are, from François the people; and the people, and children, were taught to write *aimait* and *aimaient*. Mr. Ellis quotes a learned gentleman who reproves his son for *ill orthography*. What is ill orthography but ill right-spelling? He tells us that we no longer use ill as an adjective. The ill is ill-used. Do we not continue to say an ill-turn? and ill-recompensed? and ill-taught? and ill-managed? In the same line he adds, 'nor insert *do*.' Surely we do insert it when we desire to lay stress on what we say. I do love; I do hate. In the next line he objects to *th* as the final letters of the present tense in the third person, where *s* would serve. Generally such a termination should be avoided, but never or very rarely when the next word begins with *s*. I dissent altogether from Mr. Ellis's proposition, that there is no one who would dream of

altering a great writer's language. 'Yet we expect to find the 'spelling of the new book somewhat different from that of the 'old.' *Rusticus*, and only Rusticus, *expectat*. Scholars and sound laborious critics have been careful in collating the editions of both ancient and more recent authors. Aulus Gellius tells us that Virgil wrote differently the same word. He wrote but twenty years after Catullus, yet although they were also of the same province, their spelling was unlike. Virgil never wrote *quoi*, as Catullus did uniformly; and although he wrote vernacularly in the person of a peasant, he wrote *cujum*, not *quorjum*. Catullus employed the language of Cicero and Julius Cæsar; Virgil that of Augustus and his court. Fortunately we possess the comedies of Terence and of Plautus, the richest treasures of Latinity. We there see the very handwriting of the Scipios and the Gracchi. I much commend the publisher of Milton's works who observed his orthography. The same had already been done by Tyrwhitt in his Chaucer; and Spenser has been thought as capable of spelling as Dyche. *Paradise Lost* was never indeed seen printed by the author, who had lost his sight before its publication: but there is little doubt that he ordered his daughter to observe the spelling of a few particular words, such as *sovran*, in which he adopted the Italian type preferably to the French. Mr. Ellis asks, 'Does not com-'mon sense revolt against Tillotson's alterations of Bacon to make 'him more eloquent?' But change of spelling can produce no such effect; and it is laughable to think of Tillotson working such a miracle. Mr. Ellis also speaks of Wordsworth; but, though a poet of the highest claims, it is neither in the same kind nor in the same degree as Chaucer, whose invention, spirit, and variety are equalled by Shakespeare and by Milton only. Some sonnets Wordsworth has written that Milton might have owned, but he could no more have written the *Canterbury Tales* than he could have written *Paradise Lost*, the *Samson Agonistes*, the *Allegro*, the *Penseroso*, the sonnet to Cromwell, or that sublimest of psalms, the Invocation to God on his murdered saints in Piedmont. Is it not perilous, Mr. Ellis asks, to let our spelling change with every generation? Yes indeed. Therefore I would set my foot against these changes as they are rolling on and accumulating. He 'puts it to the mass of writers 'even among ourselves, whether they would wish to have their 'own punctuation preserved in their printed works.' I know little about the mass of writers. I can only say that, to my

certain knowledge, those who are not the mass have complained to me that theirs was *not* preserved; Southey in particular, and our English Thucydides, the illustrious historian of the Peninsular War: I will add myself; for you know, my dear Forster, that I yielded to you in the preparation of my collected works. In punctuation we differ from all other nations. We think we are never safe without a sentinel on each side of our *perhaps*, of *too*, of *however*, &c. In fact I think too many stops stop the way, and that every sixth or seventh is uncalled for. I have gone farther into these questions than any of my countrymen has gone before; whether in a right direction will be decided in another age. I call upon no one to follow me, but to be obedient to grave authority, and never recalcitrant against strict analogy."

## XIV. Last Days in Bath, and final Departure from England.

"I have been out of doors," Landor wrote to me in the autumn of 1856, "not more than twice in fifty-nine "days, a few minutes in each. I think I will go and "die in Italy, but not in my old home. It is pleasant "to see the sun about one's deathbed." It was only a passing wish he thus expressed, but it was destined to have sad fulfilment.

Knowing the condition of health in which he was at the opening of 1857, it was a great shock to me to find that he had been summoned to give evidence in the Bath county-court upon a miserable squabble about a governess. The case came on in January, when, in spite of a doctor's certificate of his unfitness to appear, he was brought to the court; and such was the excitement that followed and the exhaustion consequent upon it, that there was for some time reason to apprehend a very grave result. He could hardly have put any part of this affair into a conversation that should pair-off with

his Epicurus, Ternissa, and Leontion;* and yet, with all its miserable sequel, it must be said to have had its origin in desires and tastes closely akin to those expressed in that dialogue, where the love of the very old for the society of the very young is made enchanting by all that the Graces can surround it with. Poor Landor had always the belief, that, after the fashion of the ancient philosopher, and with the same sort of charming help, he might be able to adorn and smoothen, for himself also, the declivity of age; and if for the moment, to avoid mention of the names of the ladies who now make brief appearance in his story, I borrow for them the old Greek names, they at least will have no cause to complain. It is not the reality, but the fiction, which such a comparison will place at disadvantage; for, disastrous as the end was here, it does not therefore follow that Epicurus was wrong. Unhappily everything depends in such a case upon the choice of your Ternissa and Leontion.

This was nearly the first year in which we failed to meet on the 30th of January. Landor had found himself able however to write to his brother Henry on that day. Some question as to the burning-down of a barn at Llanthony had been referred to him; to which he replied, with even more than his usual unreason as to such things, that neither his cousin Walter Landor of Rugely (co-trustee with Henry of the Llanthony estate since his brother Charles's death) nor the manager of the property, Mr. Edwards, had mentioned the incident to him, knowing well his wish never to hear anything about his estate, and acting upon his repeated instructions that they should tell him nothing. He added that before he left England seventy-two thousand pounds had

* See ante, p. 193.

been sunk on Llanthony, and in the last thirty years three hundred a-year on an average, including a small part on Ipsley; and that there was nothing he now so little desired as that any more money should be laid out on any part of it in future. "Three months hence "I shall once more purchase a landed property, situated "in the parish of Widcombe, and comprising by actual "admeasurement eight feet by four, next adjoining the "church-tower in said parish. No magpie drapery, no "lead, no rascals in hatbands, no horses in full feathers "for me. Six old chairmen are sufficient. I thought "once of complying with your kind wish that I should "lie at Tachbrook,* but I am not worth the carriage so "far." He alluded then to the illness that had borne down upon him so heavily; mentioned a bequest from Kenyon of a hundred pounds; and grieved that so hearty and genial a man, thirteen years younger than himself, should have died before him. "And now again "about dying. Out of my hundred pounds, when I get "it, I will reserve ten for my funeral, with strict orders "that the sum may not be exceeded; and the grave-"stone and grave will amount to nearly or quite ten "more. As I can live without superfluities, surely I "can die without them."

Not long after this letter was written I sent him the legacy, and soon discovered that even as much as ten pounds of it had not been reserved to himself, either for festivity or funeral. The whole of it went as a "new-year's gift" to the youthful Ternissa, by whom one-half of it was subsequently transferred, without the knowledge of the original giver, to the less youthful Leontion, for part payment of costs incurred at the trial about the governess; and some differences arising thereon

* Ante, p. 216 note.

took afterwards a character of bitterness such as never can possibly belong to any but a woman's quarrel. Hardly had the strife broken out when Landor flung himself headlong into it; not by any means, wildly inconsiderate at all times as his conduct was, out of any impulse at the time to be called unworthy. Though the part he took could not at any stage of it be pronounced right, there were many excuses to be suggested for it until he had himself rendered it ignoble. He chose to assume, gratuitously enough, but less so in the particular case than his custom ordinarily was, not merely that he himself had suffered wrong (on which point there was a great deal to have been said, if he had not taken from his friends all power of saying it), but that a very young lady who had claims on his friendly protection had been made the victim of injustice by another lady not so young; and that upon him, in such circumstances, devolved the duty of hurling vengeance at her oppressor. An obligation of which he straightway proceeded to discharge himself, after no other than his most ordinary method.

Believing here, as at every quarrel in which he had ever been engaged, that he saw on one side a fiend incarnate and on the other an angel of light, he permitted that astounding credulity to work his irascibility into madness; and there was then as much good to be got by reasoning with him as by arguing with a storm off Cape Horn. It was vain to point out to him that he had nothing himself to gain from so sordid a dispute; that what he had lost was gone irrecoverably; and that there was no such mighty difference between the cause he championed and that which he assailed, to justify or call for interference. Why should I once more repeat what this narrative has told so often? He rejected every

warning, rushed into print, and found himself enmeshed in an action for libel.

On hearing this I proceeded to Bath, and he was extricated for a time; but I quitted the place with a sorrowful misgiving that the last illness of the old man, while it had left him subject to the same transitory storms of frantic passion, had permanently also weakened him, mentally yet more than bodily; and that, even when anger was no longer present to overcloud his intellect, there had ceased to be really available to his use such a faculty of discrimination between right and wrong, or such a saving consciousness of evil from good, as is necessary to constitute a responsible human being. He had not now even memory enough to recollect what he was writing from day to day; and while the power of giving keen and clear expression to every passing mood of bitterness remained to him, his reason had too far deserted him to leave it other than a fatal gift. He could apply no gauge or measure to what he was bent on either doing or saying; he seemed no longer to have the ability to see anything not palpably before him; and of the effect of any given thing on his own or another's reputation, he was become wholly powerless to judge. Changes in him there also were which otherwise painfully affected me. He had so long and steadily consented to act on my advice exclusively in the publication of his writings, that here I believed I had still some efficient control. Unhappily it proved to be not so. There had come to be mixed up with the miserable quarrel a question as to a portfolio containing a great many scraps of his poetry, either of very old or of very recent date, in effect little more than the mere sweepings and refuse of his writing-desk; which he had lent to one of the parties in

the squabble for transcription of some portion of its contents, and which he professed to have been unable to get back until he had publicly advertised its unauthorised detention. The whole of this collection of pieces, for the most part entirely unworthy of him, I left him determined to put into print, against my earnest and repeated remonstrance. It was his plan to publish them as Dry Leaves; and they became ultimately the book called *Dry Sticks*. He grieved to do anything in the teeth of my advice, he said; but, if he did not publish the poems, others would. He had for the time persuaded himself that he had really no other motive: yet I could not but suspect that another, quite unconsciously to himself, lurked behind; and that he thought he might thus find excuse for occasional covert allusion to occurrences which the result of my interference had bound him, not indeed by express agreement on my part (as erroneously supposed at the time), but by honourable understanding on his, no longer to notice openly.

I left Bath in the September of 1857, and to the close of that year he never recovered strength. "My "weakness," he wrote to me in the middle of October, "is excessive. With extreme difficulty do I weigh "myself up from my arm-chair. My good and most "intelligent friend, Dr. Watson, is very attentive to "me, and says my constitution will bear me through. "I doubt whether this is good intelligence. The same "spasms, in that case, will come over again some "other time, and I wish it were all at an end now." He had nevertheless persisted in his determination to print what I thought so worthless as well so objectionable, having found a publisher to undertake it in Edinburgh, on my declining to have anything to

do with it in London; he had farther availed himself of my continued opposition to withhold any sight of the proofs; and by the merest accident it came to my knowledge that the publication would be unworthy of him in more senses than one, for that allusion would certainly be made in it to what he should have felt himself bound never to reopen. I wrote upon this to his solicitors, and to a kindly and zealous friend (Captain B——); by whom again the case was stated to him, with all that a persistence in his disastrous course would involve; and from them came an assurance to me shortly afterward that everything wrong would be erased. Never at any previous period of our twenty-two years of uninterrupted intercourse had it occurred to me to doubt him, when once his word had been given; often as I had seen him put passion before reason, there was yet a nobler part of his character which as often had asserted itself; and the foreboding of calamity which now pressed itself upon me, against all the comforting reassurances I received, arose simply from a feeling it was impossible to resist, that age and illness had conquered him at last, and left him other than the Landor I had known. It was a sorry satisfaction afterwards to feel that nothing had happened to him which had not been foretold, nor anything in the way of warning omitted that could possibly have saved him. But this undoubtedly was the case, and I had only to guard myself then against other consequences. "I bear you no ill-will, Lizzy," says Mr. Bennet in Miss Austen's delightful novel, "for "being justified in the warning you gave me. Con- "sidering how matters turned out, I think this shows "magnanimity." Whether my old friend was ever to have enough of his old self restored to enable him to show this magnanimity, will in due time be seen.

Let the reader meanwhile take this additional evidence of the strange state of Landor's mind at the moment. He persisted for some time in making it a condition with his new publisher, Mr. Nichol of Edinburgh, that his name should appear on the title-page of his book as "*the late* W. S. Landor." I learn this from the very earnest remonstrance of Mr. Nichol. "I take the li- "berty," that gentleman wrote (Dec. 17, 1857), "of beg- "ging you to allow me to make the title stand thus, *Dry* "*Sticks, Faggoted by W. S. Landor*, and not, as you still "continue to write it, *the late W. S. Landor*. It will "sufficiently pain many, when, in God's good time, "you will be spoken of as *the late:* and I think the ex- "pression would jar on the ear of all your friends, as it "does on mine." The good publisher carried his point, and it was well that he should; but in the strange suggestion so persistently made, there was, alas, some truth, for much that had constituted the Landor known to his friends had for the present departed. Whether it was destined ever to return, none might say; but it had become, at this time, a thing of the past.

I had greatly desired to visit him in the January of 1858, but the character and tone of his letters dissuaded me; and the book to which I had so strongly objected was at last on the eve of its appearance when he thus wrote: "All this illness is too surely coming "over again. What a pity that Death should have "made two bites of a cherry! He seems to grin at me "for saying so, and to shake in my face as much of a "fist as belongs to him. But he knows I never cared "a fig for his menaces, and am now quite ready to let "him have his way. Alas, alas! as we have talked to- "gether for so many years, we shall never talk again. "Why can not this swimming of the head carry me to

" the grave a little more rapidly? This is the only " thing I now desire. I remember faces and places, but " their names I totally forget. Verses of the *Odyssea* " and *Iliad* run perpetually into my mind, after the bet- " ter part of a century, and there seems to be no longer " room there for anything else." I believe him now indeed to have become, for the mere time at least, impatient for the close, and to have had the sense that it might have been happier for him to have seen it earlier. As he so finely said in his ode to Southey,

> " We hurry to the river we must cross,
> And swifter downward every footstep wends;
> Happy who reach it ere they count the loss
> Of half their faculties and half their friends!"

Soon I was told what occasioned me no surprise, that the book just published contained in other forms the objectionable passages on whose erasure I had insisted, as well as all the scrapings and rubbish of his desk; the only shadow of an excuse made for the appearance of such " levities" being a notification at the back of the title-page that " none would have been collected but " that a copy of the greater number was without the " knowledge or consent of the author procured from a " person who had engaged to transcribe them," thereby rendering necessary such precaution as only publication could afford " against subtraction, or what is worse, " addition." It is hardly necessary to add that very shortly, with even less surprise, I learnt that friends of my own in Bath had already heard whispers of another contemplated action for libel. But a graver announcement made to me only a few days later threw everything else into the shade. On the 28th of March one of Landor's nieces wrote to me that she had been called suddenly to her uncle Walter. He had been found in-

sensible on the previous morning, and had continued in that state twenty-four hours. During the four hours previous to her writing he had begun very slightly to rally, but his condition continued to be extremely precarious. During the next week accounts were sent me daily; skilful physicians, Dr. Watson and Dr. M'Dermott, and his kind good nieces, were in constant attendance; and few dared to hope against hope in such a case. But the struggle was short though sharp; the grim visitor was beaten off once more; and his first letter to me after getting again into his drawing-room was in the old characteristic vein. It told me of books he had been reading, of Shelley's life, and of his old favourite Swift; and closed thus: "I take it uncivil in Death to invite " and then to balk me. It was troublesome to walk " back, when I found he would not take me in. I do " hope and trust he will never play me the same trick " again. We ought both of us to be graver." I had expressed a wish that he would as soon as possible try change of scene, and, by way of bringing round us some old and pleasant memories, had told him of a cottage I proposed to take at Wimbledon. With such quickness he replied, and in such genial temper, that I began to understand what was told me by those around him in his illness, that this last attack, bringing him as it did to the very verge of the grave, had yet seemed in its retreat to have left his mind less clouded than at any time during the two years preceding. I could hardly expect that he would come; but his refusal, and the kindly bit of doggerel verse sent with it, very pleasantly told me that old simple scenes and enjoyments had been again in his thoughts.

" I never more shall have the luck
" To feed again the lonely duck
" Upon the lake of Wimbledon.

"Forster, as jovial and as kind
"As Kenyon, finds me less inclin'd,
"Now he and health alike are gone.

"Here you see all I can do. Yesterday" (the letter is dated in the middle of June 1858) "I drove out for "the first time, and was less fatigued than I expected. "My object was my burial-ground. It has been fixt on, "near the church-tower at Widcombe. Napier's father "lies buried there, he told me. Sixty years ago, in "this season, I promised a person I dearly loved it "should be there. We were sitting under some old "elders, now supplanted by a wall of the churchyard." At the end of the same month I had further proof of how strongly his thoughts were bent in this direction. He sent me an epitaph he had written for himself.

"Ut sine censurâ, sine laude inscripta, sepulcro
Sint patris ac matris nomina sola meo:
At puro invidiæ, sua gloria rara, poetæ
Incumbente rosâ laurus obumbret humum."

"But then," he added, "you see the verses are not "fitted for a stone. Nor do I care a straw whether a "rose and laurel cover my bones. Sandford will see "them run to earth." He had no consciousness as yet that others were already in hot pursuit of him, with quite other than roses or laurels in their hands; and that the chase would only end when his bones had been run to earth in an Italian burial-ground.

The blow fell at last so suddenly that I only heard of what had been determined after the resolution was taken. Told by his law-advisers that the matter complained of was such that an adverse verdict must be expected, and that the damages would necessarily be heavier because of the breach of an undertaking which they had themselves given in his name upon my interfer-

ence in the previous year,—a plan at that time started, and only then at my suggestion abandoned, was at the same interview put before Landor, and eagerly assented to. This was, that he should place his property beyond seizure for damages, break-up his house in Bath, sell his pictures, and return to Italy. There was no time to lose if such a scheme were to be carried out successfully; and it was with supreme astonishment I received an intimation, telegraphed at midday from Bath on the 12th of July 1858, that Landor would be at my house in London that night, accompanied by one of his nieces. Some friends were dining with me, among them Mr. Dickens, who, on the arrival of the old man too fatigued by his journey to be able to join the dinner-table, left the room to see him; and from another friend, the Rev. Mr. Elwin, who was also one of the party, I received very lately a letter reminding me of what occurred. "I "thought that Landor would talk over with him the "unpleasant crisis; and I shall never forget my amaze-"ment when Dickens came back into the room laugh-"ing, and said that he found him very jovial, and that "his whole conversation was upon the character of Ca-"tullus, Tibullus, and other Latin poets." He crossed to France four days later, on the morning of the 15th of July; and I never saw him again.

# BOOK EIGHTH.

1858–1864. ÆT. 83–89.

## LAST SIX YEARS IN ITALY.

I. *In his old Home.* II. *At Siena.* III. *In Florence.* IV. *Five unpublished Scenes, being the last Imaginary Conversations.* V. *The Close.*

### I. In his old Home.

Landor went first to Genoa, and there it was his intention to have stayed; but considerations urged by members of his family prevailed, and he decided to move on to his old home in Fiesole.

Before he left Genoa the advice on which he quitted England had been embodied in legal forms, and he had assigned over to others the property reserved to his use under the trust-deeds of Llanthony. It was his own wish that the assignment should have been made to one of his nieces; but this was overruled, and everything over which any control had been retained to him passed to the ownership of Arnold Landor, his eldest son.

There are matters as to which I have thus far imposed silence on myself, and intend as much as possible to continue to do so; but it is quite necessary, at this point of my narrative, that I should briefly state the position in which this deed of transfer left what had been Landor's worldly estate. When he separated from his family in 1835, Llanthony and Ipsley may be said, at a rough calculation, to have been yielding very certainly more

than three thousand a-year rental, the deductions for mortgages and insurances at that time being a little over fourteen hundred a-year, and, of the balance, not more than from six to seven hundred a-year being taken by Landor, who left the rest to accumulate for casual expenses, repairs, and as a surplus fund for younger children. Of this six hundred, upon quitting Italy he left two-thirds to Mrs. Landor, at the same time transferring absolutely to his eldest son the villa and farms where the family lived, and of which the farm-produce went far towards their expenses of living; while he took, for his own maintenance in London, only the remaining third. This proved however to be too little, and after a year or two it was raised, out of the surplus at Llanthony, to four hundred a-year; trenching by so much on the reserved fund for younger children. But they had meanwhile profited by legacies from other members of the family; and upon Arnold's visit to England in 1842, sufficient had been raised to pay the debt to Ablett for Fiesole, an insurance of equal amount indemnifying Arnold. The result was that when Landor, now on the eve of his return to his old home, executed a further deed of transfer to his son, whereby the latter became entitled to everything arising from Llanthony, the property which had once been entirely his (not a shilling of it having been derived from other sources than those which his mother* had so vigilantly protected and improved for his use) was wholly and exclusively at the disposal of others. His son Arnold, standing next in the entails of Llanthony and of Ipsley, which he was sure very soon to inherit free from all incumbrance, was meanwhile invested, by the just-executed deed of transfer, with the rights over them up to this time possessed

* Ante, i. 420 and 511.

by his father. He had also, by his father's free gift, the absolute ownership of the villa and farms at Fiesole; and, by a legacy from the Landor family, the interest of a thousand pounds. By similar legacies his sister had a hundred a-year to her exclusive use, and each of his two younger brothers eighty pounds a-year; while his mother, whose four hundred a-year, secured in 1835, had been raised to five hundred upon the resettlement in 1842, had this larger annuity secured to her for life on her husband's death by charge on the Llanthony estate. Landor himself was now travelling to Florence with a few pictures, a few books, a small quantity of silver plate, and something short of a hundred and fifty pounds, as the sum of all his earthly possessions. This had been the amount realised in Manchester by the sale of the pictures that did not accompany him.

Before he reached Fiesole a thousand pounds damages had been awarded against him, and proceedings begun to compel the payment. The deed of transfer, as I well knew, was little likely to stand against resolute and determined efforts to overthrow it. The court of chancery, on application, granted an injunction against receiving the rents until the case should be argued; practically the deed of transfer was defeated; and before Landor died the entire amount of damages and costs had been paid under order of the court. Of course this affected only the sum reserved to Landor's use, and everything else remained as I have stated.

On his way to Italy, and after his arrival, he wrote to me continually; but one subject mainly occupied his letters, and I could give to it but one reply. As to other matters, it became very soon obvious that the only result that was reasonably to have been expected was not far distant, and that his old home could be a home

to him no more. "Red mullets compensated Milo for "Rome. We have them daily, with ortolans of late, "and beccaficos. But these do not indemnify me for "Bath, the only city I could ever live in comfortably. "I have been in Florence twice only since I came here "eleven weeks ago." This, in October 1858, was the most favourable aspect of things. But before the end of that month he announced to me that his health was such as to admit of no chance of his surviving, and that, by means of the small remnant of the pittance he had taken with him, he had so arranged that he should sleep his last sleep in the graveyard of the little church near Bath where already he had chosen his place of rest.

> "Widcombe! few seek with thee their resting-place;
> But I, when I have run my weary race,
> Will throw my bones upon thy churchyard turf;
> Altho' malignant waves on foreign shore
> Have stranded me, and I shall lift no more
> My hoary head above the hissing surf."

I was nevertheless not unprepared for what followed in little more than a fortnight, when, in the middle of December, he wrote to me from Florence that he had left Fiesole; that he was somewhat less unhappy; that twice in five weeks, for nearly a quarter of an hour, he had walked out in the sun; and that his principal misery, which indeed he now dwelt upon as the very worst that ever had befallen him, was the continued and inexplicable delay in the publication of his enlarged *Hellenics*. But while in consultation with his relatives in England as to what step for providing him a new home it might be advisable to take, we heard that he was again at Fiesole.

It will not be supposed, after all which has been said in this book of the defects of Landor's character, that my object now is to throw exclusively on others

the blame of what occurred during the first ten months after his return to Italy. It is only fair to say that his letters themselves, as may be seen even in the foregoing favourable specimens of them, continued to confirm the impression as to his mental state made upon me by the incidents described in the last section. That he was irritable, difficult to manage, intemperate of tongue, subject to all kinds of suspicions, fancies, and mistakes; that even when treated most considerately he was often unjust, but, when met by any kind of violence, was apt to be driven wild with rage; that, in a word, choleric as he had always been, he was now become *very old*,— is not, I fear, to be doubted. Knowing all this only too well, I abstain from even a mention of the character of the complaints in his letters; and from all formal expression of opinion, decided as is that which I hold, on the way in which those with whom he was now attempting to live should have discharged the duty they were under every natural and human obligation to render, and from which they could not be released by any amount of mad irritability on his part, or any number of irrational demands upon their patience. The attempt to live at the villa I knew from the first must fail. In itself to the last degree unpromising, the time and the accompaniments of the unhappy trial made it hopeless and impossible. Not however by him, but by those who should have seen that there was at least nothing insane in his desire to have such other provision made as they might easily have arranged for him, was the miserable torture prolonged. Thrice during those ten months he left Fiesole to seek a lodging in Florence; thrice he was brought back; and it was on the fourth occasion, when, in the first week of July 1859, he had taken refuge "in the hotel on the Arno with eighteen-pence in his

" pocket," that the gravity of the situation, and the absolute necessity at last of doing what should have been done at first, were put before me by my old friend Mr. Browning, at that time living in Florence.

Was it possible, he asked, that " from Mr. Landor's " relatives in England the means of existence could be " afforded for him in a lodging at Florence?" To which I had to reply, that, several times during the progress of these dreary months, the same question had been put from England to Mr. Landor's nearer relatives at Fiesole, on whom he had, quite apart from any natural duty, such claims for help by way of money as I have just described; and that the same answer had invariably come. The trouble had been got rid of by Landor's return to the villa. Now however he would *not* return; the question had resolved itself into his living upon means to be furnished from England, or the alternative of his not living at all; and what the old man's fate might have been, during even the brief interval required to determine this, it would be difficult to say, if the zealous aid of the good Mr. Kirkup had failed him, or if he had not found a friend so wise and kind as Mr. Browning. " You will have heard," he wrote to me on the 6th of August, " that I am now in a cottage " near Siena, which I owe to Browning, the kind friend " who found it for me, whom I had seen only three or " four times in my life, yet who made me the voluntary " offer of what money I wanted, and who insists on " managing my affairs here, and paying for my lodg- " ings and sustenance. Never was such generosity and " such solicitude as this incomparable man has shown " in my behalf."

Two days after the date of that letter Mr. Browning had heard from myself the result of the application to

Landor's brothers. They asked only to know what sum was wanted, and they engaged at once to supply it as long as their brother might live. From this time up to the day of his death, I handed over on their behalf to Mr. Browning two hundred pounds every year by quarterly payments, to which an additional sum of fifty pounds was held always in reserve for special wants arising; and the money continued to be applied to Landor's use under Mr. Browning's immediate direction, even after the event which plunged so many besides himself into mourning, and occasioned his departure from Italy in 1861. With a few extracts from the letter to myself which will explain these arrangements, and will describe the way in which, to the very last, they were strictly and successfully carried out, I quit this distasteful subject for ever.

"I agree absolutely with you," Mr. Browning wrote from Siena on the 13th of August 1859, "in your ap-
" preciation of the character of Landor and its neces-
" sities now and for the future in this untoward posi-
" tion,—so absolutely that I shall not go into minute
" justification of any opinion I may give you about what
" is to be done, but take for almost granted that you
" will understand it: subject to questioning from you,
" should that not be the case. Your plan is the only
" proper one for obtaining the end we aim at. Mr.
" Landor is wholly unfit to be anything but the re-
" cipient of the necessary money's worth, rather than
" the money itself. Fortunately, he professes to have
" the same conviction, and prefers such an arrange-
" ment to any other. He requires a perpetual guar-
" dian in the shape of a servant; one to be ever at
" hand to explain away the irritations and hallucina-
" tions as they arise. They come and go, and leave no

" trace, *treated so;* otherwise the effect is disastrous. . . .
" I propose to take an apartment as near my own resid-
" ence in Florence as can be found, and establish him
" there as comfortably and as economically as possible.
" I will endeavour to induce my wife's old servant
" Wilson, who married Ferdinando (Romagnoli) still
" in our service, to devote herself to the care of our
" friend. I may say, after our fourteen years' experi-
" ence of her probity, truthfulness, gentleness, and as-
" siduity, that he can be placed in no better hands;
" and were he bestowed on a person one whit less trust-
" worthy, I should expect some melancholy result the
" next day. I can depend on Wilson's acting *for me*
" in all respects, and not simply complying with his
" fancies or profiting by his mistaken generosities. I
" will receive the two hundred pounds in quarterly
" payments, as you propose; and will transmit to you,
" at the end of every quarter, a detailed account of
" Landor's expenses duly examined and certified by
" Kirkup." This last condition was the only one to which I refused assent; and Landor's niece, to whom it was then proposed to transmit such account, also as strongly objected. I believe that Mr. Browning did nevertheless, against renewed protest, continue to render it to the close.

## II. At Siena.

While the arrangements for his future life in Florence were in progress Landor remained quietly at Siena, occupying a pleasant little cottage in a vineyard inhabited only by the contadino, or farming-gardener, and his wife. Subsequently he became the guest of an accomplished American then staying at Siena, who for

years has made Italy his home, and has connected his name with Italian art by works not unworthy of its happiest time.

"Landor has to-day," Mr. Browning wrote to me at the close of August, "completed a three weeks' stay " with the Storys. They declare most emphatically " that a more considerate, gentle, easily-satisfied guest " never entered their house. They declare his visit has " been an unalloyed delight to them; and this, quite " as much from his gentlemanliness and simple habits, " and evident readiness to be pleased with the least " attention, as from his conversation, which would be " attractive under any circumstances. An intelligent " friend also, on a visit to them, bears witness to the " same effect. They perceive indeed, though not af- " fecting themselves, inequalities of temper in him; but " they all agree that he may be managed with the " greatest ease by 'civility' alone." Such always was Landor, when he would consent to submit himself to friendly influences.

Again Mr. Browning wrote to me from Siena on the 5th of September. "At present Landor's conduct " is faultless. His wants are so moderate, his evenness " of temper so remarkable, his gentleness and readiness " to be advised so exemplary, that it all seems *too* good; " as if some rock must lurk under such smooth water. " His thankfulness for the least attention, and anxiety " to return it, are almost affecting under all circum- " stances. He leads a life of the utmost simplicity." From Florence also, to anticipate a very little the days immediately after their return, Mr. Browning wrote to me in the middle of October, being then himself on the eve of going to winter in Rome, that he should be grieved indeed to lose sight for a while of the

wonderful old man, whose gentleness and benignity had never been at fault for a moment in their three months' intercourse. They had walked together for more than an hour and a half only two days before. His health had been perfect, his mind apparently at ease. "He "writes Latin verses; few English, but a few; and "just before we left Siena an imaginary conversation "suggested by something one of us had said about the "possible reappearance of the body after death. He "looks better than ever by the amplitude of a capital "beard, most becoming we all judge it." "If," Mrs. Browning at the same time wrote to me, "if you could "only see how well he looks in his curly white beard!"

From his own letters to myself during the stay at Siena I should hardly have dared to judge so favourably, though there were some allowances to be made. His great immediate trouble being removed, he had now again unhappily set his heart on obtaining, through me, some means of making public reply to what had been publicly said of him in England in connection with the trial at Bath; and I had no alternative but to tell him plainly that the thing was quite impossible. He did not take this so well as the condition of mind above described might have led me to anticipate; but the case as affecting him involved, in many particulars, so much real hardship, it was so impossible to speak of what had been to him the original provocation, and all that followed had given to his punishment a proportion so exceeding his offence judged even at its very worst, that any wrong arising out of it incident to myself seemed but a part of a wretched complication not avoidable by either of us. Landor was very shortly to apply to his friend what the reader has seen shrewdly applied by Mr. Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* to a friend in similar

circumstances; and I was not to have the benefit of the same magnanimity. It is however the more incumbent on me to say, on the eve of our only estrangement in a quarter of a century of friendship, that the impression left with me altogether was exactly what Mr. Browning and Mr. Story depict in the foregoing letters, for that reason here introduced. The drawbacks have been described already. There were always those occasional outbreaks, very unwarrantable because generally unjust to others, which in so many instances I have shown to be as little rational as reducible to reason. Indeed I should say, on the whole, that in Landor's affections at their best, just as more rarely in even the finest parts of his books, there was a certain incoherency. But, in several leading qualities, his character was also quite as fine as his books, and the letters quoted do only justice to it. He had a disposition largely generous; an anger easily placable; and an eagerness to return, in quite chivalrous excess, whatever courtesy or attention he received, which was at all times delightful to witness.

The conversation above referred to was not the only one written at Siena. I received another from him at the same date, with earnest appeal that I should endeavour by means of it to get some help for Garibaldi's wounded; and with this he sent me several pieces of writing having the same common drift, to recommend such a settlement of Italian affairs as might leave Venice and Florence independent republics, and King Victor Emanuel protector and president of the Italian States in union. I need hardly add that in this 1859 year the promise had gone suddenly forth, backed by French legions, of a free Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic; and the conclusion to which Landor at once had rushed he expressed in that form.

There appears to have been some difficulty in getting him back to Florence, increased by the effect produced upon him by some new step in the chancery proceedings consequent on the injunction against him recently obtained. He wrote to tell me that the object of all that was going on could be no other than to drive him mad; that the publication of his defence alone could save him; and that until this could be accomplished he must retire into utter solitude. His friends were about to leave Siena, and he should himself go into some cottage or hut at Viarreggio. Alas, what could I reply? I could only wait until a few days' later post brought me word that to the arguments employed to induce his return to Florence he had thought it right to yield. "Nothing," he added in this letter to me, "can exceed "Mr. Browning's continued kindness. Life would be "almost worth keeping for that recollection alone."

## III. In Florence.

The lodgings found for Landor in Florence, and where he remained until his death, were in a little house under the wall of the city directly back of the Carmine, in a bye street called the Via Nunziatina, not far from that in which the casa Guidi stands: a quarter always liked by the Florentines for its antiquity and picturesqueness, and having higher associations since both for them and for English visitors; to whom a marble slab upon the wall in its last-mentioned street, placed by order of the municipality of Florence, now indicates the house in which a great English poetess made Italy the subject of her latest song.

"He is in a small comfortable apartment," Mr. Browning wrote to me, "newly papered and furnished; a

" sitting-room, dining-room, bed-room, and book-room
" communicating with each other, on the first floor.
" Below are rooms for Mrs. Wilson and a maid-servant.
" There is a small garden attached. He professes him-
" self quite satisfied with all our attempts to make him
" comfortable, and seems to like Mrs. Wilson much:
" but there is some inexplicable fault in his temper,
" whether natural or acquired, which seems to render
" him very difficult to manage. He forgets, miscon-
" ceives, and makes no endeavour to be just, or indeed
" rational; and this in matters so infinitely petty that
" there is no providing against them." This letter was written from Rome (9th December 1859), and only told what, knowing the condition of mind in which Landor still continued, I expected to hear, as soon as the personal influences and restraints should be withdrawn under which he had been living lately. In the same month I also heard from himself (December 21), that for the first time since his return to Italy it had been snowing all night, and that this alone was like England to him. " Bath has no resemblance on earth, and I never have
" been happy in any other place long together. If ever
" I see it again, however, it must be from underground
" or above. I am quite ready and willing to go, and
" would fain lie in Widcombe churchyard, as I promised
" one who is no more. It may cost forty pounds alto-
" gether. I cannot long survive the disgrace of my
" incapacity to prove the character of those who per-
" secute me, and this you only can relieve me from.
" When I think of it, I feel the approach of madness;
" and so adieu." There was much else in this letter which I do not quote, but to which I found it absolutely necessary so to reply as to put clearly before him, without any kind of doubt, that what he desired could not

be done. This led to the suspension of our correspondence. I continued to write to him for some time, but my letters were unanswered; and he did not write to me again until a year before his death.

In June 1860 Mr. Browning had returned to Florence, and from him, in a letter dated the 15th, I had once more personal report of my old friend. "I find him very "well, satisfied on the whole, busy with verse-making, "and particularly delighted at the acquisition of three "execrable daubs by Domenichino and Gaspar Poussin, "most benevolently battered by time. He has a beauti- "ful beard, foam-white and soft. He reads the *Odyssey* "in the original with extraordinary ease. When he al- "ludes to that other matter, it is clear that he is, from "whatever peculiarity, quite impervious to reasoning or "common sense. He cannot in the least understand "that he is at all wrong, or injudicious, or unwary, or "unfortunate in anything, but in the being prevented "by you from doubling and quadrupling the offence. "He spent the evening here the night before last. "Whatever he may profess, the thing he really loves "is a pretty girl to talk nonsense with; and he finds "comfort in American visitors, who hold him in proper "respect."

To even such a visitor, a young lady who saw him frequently in this and the following year, we are indebted for one or two additional glimpses of him in his last Florence home.* Describing the little two-story casa, no. 2671, as halfway down the street, with its bed-room, dining-room, and sitting-room opening into each other, she says that in the latter he was always to be found, in a large armchair, surrounded by paint-

* Papers in the *Atlantic Monthly*, entitled "Last Days of Walter Savage Landor." I have already quoted them, ante, i. 173, 174.

ings which he declared he could not live without (all of them very bad for the most part, excepting one genuine small Salvator), his hair snowy white and his beard of patriarchal proportions, his gray eyes still keen and clear, his grand head not unlike Michael Angelo's Moses, and at his feet a pretty little Pomeranian dog called Gaillo, the gift of Mr. William Story. Another likeness the old man's look reminded her of, which she was emboldened one day to name to him. "Mr. Landor, "you *do* look like a lion." To which the reply came, "You are not the first who has said so. One day when "Napier was dining with me, he threw himself back in "his chair with a hearty laugh to tell me he had just "discovered that I looked like an old lion." "And a "great compliment you must have thought it," says the young lady, "for the lion is king of beasts." "Yes," he rejoined, "but only a beast after all."

Of this young lady's recollections generally it must be said that, though the kindliest feeling and very delicate perceptions characterise them throughout, there are not many facts in them that were worth recording. They are too truly what they profess to be; "the old "man of Florence in 1859, 1860, and 1861; just before "the intellectual light began to flicker and go out." His courtly manners, his memory for things of the past, and his humorous quickness in putting odd little sayings into verse, seem most to have impressed her. Reference having been made one morning to Monk Lewis's poem of Alonzo the Brave, he recited it in cadences from beginning to end without the slightest hesitation or the tripping of a word, remarking that he had not even thought of the thing for thirty years. He undertook to teach Latin to his young friend; gave her a great many lessons with much zeal; and entered the room on each

appointed day with a bouquet of camellias or roses, the products of his little garden.

Some fruit, too, the old tree had yet to shed. Calling upon him one morning, she found him at work on some dramatic scenes dealing with a time of Greece before history was; introducing, by a somewhat daring stretch of chronology, Homer himself upon a visit to the father of Ulysses; and closing with the poet's death on a topmost peak above the palace overlooking all the kingdom of Ithaca. With an exception hitherto unpublished that I shall presently lay before the reader, these scenes were the last in which Landor's genius showed itself undimmed by age. He had carried out to perfection in them that old Greek simplicity of which I have formerly spoken, and of which in modern writing I really do not know another instance so entirely true. It is the simplicity, not of baldness, but of the youth of the world. The king bids his guest to supper while yet the dainties that are to compose it are still themselves enjoying life.

> At hand is honey in the honeycomb,
> And melon, and those blushing pouting buds
> That fain would hide them under crisped leaves.
> Soon the blue dove and particolour'd hen
> Shall quit the stable-rafter caught at roost,
> And goat shall miss her suckling in the morn;
> Supper will want them ere the day decline.

He orders afterward a bath to be prepared for their guest, and, as he does so, the thought of his lost Ulysses arises to him.

> Now leave us, child,
> And bid our good Melampos to prepare
> That brazen bath wherein my rampant boy
> Each morning lay full-length, struggling at first,
> Then laughing as he splasht the water up
> Against his mother's face bent over him.
> Is this the Odysseus first at quoit and bar?

> Is this the Odysseus call'd to counsel kings,
> He whose name sounds beyond our narrow sea?

I may not quote more, but here is enough to throw light on what the writer said to his young-lady visitor. "It will be thought audacious, and most so by those "who know the least of Homer, to represent him as talk- "ing familiarly. He must often have done it, as Milton "and Shakespeare did. There is homely talk in the "Odyssey. Fashion turns round like Fortune. Twenty "years hence perhaps, this conversation of Homer and "Laertes, in which for the first time Greek domestic "manners have been represented by any modern poet, "may be recognised and approved. Our sculptors and "painters frequently take their subjects from antiquity; "are our poets never to pass beyond the mediæval? "At our own doors we listen to the affecting song of "the shirt; but some few of us, at the end of it, turn "back to catch the song of the sirens."

Landor's American friends quitted Florence in the autumn of 1861, but during that spring and summer they had taken frequent drives in its neighbourhood, "and not forgetful in the least things, the old man, in "spite of his years, would always insist upon taking "the front seat, and was more active than many a "younger man in assisting us in and out of the carri- "age." During one of their excursions, as they passed on a summer's day along the north side of the Arno, Landor gazed long and sadly at a terrace overlooking the water and forming part of the casa Pelosi, occupied of old by the Blessingtons. The description of another of these drives carries with it a painful interest. "Once we drove up to aerial Fiesole; and never can I "forget Landor's manner while in the neighbourhood "of his former home. It had been proposed that we

" should turn back when only halfway up the hill. *Ah,* " *go a little further,* Landor said nervously; *I should like* " *to see my villa.* Of course his wish was our pleasure, " and so the drive was continued. Landor sat immov- " able, with head turned in the direction of the villa " Gherardesca. At first sight of it he gave a sudden " start, and genuine tears filled his eyes and coursed " down his cheeks. *There is where I lived,* he said, " breaking a long silence and pointing to his old estate. " Still we mounted the hill, and when, at a turn in the " road, the villa stood out before us clearly and dis- " tinctly, Landor said, *Let us give the horses a rest here!* " We stopped, and for several minutes Landor's face " was fixed upon the villa. *There now, we can return* " *to Florence, if you like,* he murmured finally with a " deep sigh. *I have seen it probably for the last time.* " Hardly a word was spoken during the drive home. " Landor seemed to be absent-minded." A tragedy lies underneath those few sentences of which every scene had been bitterly acted out, though not a line of it can be written here.

After 1861, the year when Mr. Browning left Italy and in which Landor also lost his American friends, he more rarely quitted the house. But he busied himself still with writing of various kinds. He printed an imaginary dialogue in Italian (whether the purest Tuscan may be doubted) between Savonarola and the prior of Florence, devoting its equally imaginary profits to the help of Garibaldi's wounded; he wrote many occasional verses of no great worth; and, to the same English journal which had published three new Imaginary Conversations by him during the year just passed, the *Athenæum,* he sent over a fourth which appeared in the autumn of 1862. During this time he also brought together some

old and new Latin verses which he was very anxious that I should publish. They came to me in the following year with a prefatory note in which his old feeling as to France, more embittered by recent events, received characteristic expression. "Several of the Latin verses "here collected were written fourscore years ago, when "the youths of England were set a-fire by the French "Revolution. France is now safely locked up, with her "hands tied behind her, and whipped when she hoots "too loud for the ears of her keeper."

The speakers in the first conversation printed in the *Athenæum* (in 1861) were Virgil and Horace, on the road to Brundusium; and of the character of both poets, in their generous praise of each other, a pleasing impression is left. The second had for its speakers Macchiavelli and Guicciardini, their subject being Italy. Her unity under a prince of Savoy is predicted, as well as the quarter from which the worst obstruction to it will come. Often had Landor made his young American friend laugh at his comments on the *preti;* as plentiful as fleas, he would say, and an even greater curse, because they were "fleas demoralised;" and in this dialogue there are capital hits much to the same purpose. "Nothing can be hoped for," says Macchiavelli, "where priests and monks swarm in all seasons. "Other grubs and insects die down, these never do. "Even locusts, after they have consumed the grain and "herbage, take flight or are swept away, and leave no "living progeny on the ground behind them. The "vermin between skin and flesh are ineradicable." "But what," says the other, "can we do with the "religious?" to which, from Macchiavelli, there is a terse reply with a wide application: "*Teach them* "*religion.*" The third and fourth of these Conversa-

tions, the latter printed in August 1862, had in both the same interlocutors, his old favourites Milton and Marvel. The theme of the first was chiefly poetry, and that of the second matters connected with English history or social life: but neither of them added anything to what on both subjects he had said better before. The same remark is indeed to be made of nearly all he now wrote up to the time of his death. It was all very wonderful for a man verging on his ninetieth year; and though it could hardly be expected to have other value, I shall even yet have to make exception for one or two pieces to be published in these final pages for the first time, where, at the very close and on the eve of total darkness, the light about to be extinguished flashes brightly forth once more.

The contents of the volume of *Heroic Idyls* published in 1863 had been brought to London during the same year by Mr. Twisleton, who had carried out to Landor an introduction from Browning, and whose visits to the old man that summer were perhaps nearly his last intellectual pleasure. "He found me," said Landor, "I "will not say on my last legs, but really and truly on "no legs at all. These last three days I have been "extremely ill, totally deaf and almost insensible during "two of them, half-deaf and just alive the third. But "Mr. Twisleton has tolerated my half-deafness, and has "nearly cured the other half. How refreshing it is to "find a well-bred man anywhere! And what rare "good sense Mr. Twisleton adds to good humour and "fine scholarship!" The new book was dedicated to this new friend.

At the same date, and in the midst of these infirmities, it is pleasant to be able to add that Landor was receiving also other personal attentions; as well from his

fast ally Mr. Kirkup, as from his younger sons Walter and Charles, the latter of whom especially had become frequent in attendance on him. But it was at this time Colonel Stopford's death occurred, and I can understand him to have been greatly shaken by it; as well for the regard his friend had himself inspired, as for Mrs. Stopford's sake. She was his wife's younger sister, and never, in any part of his life, had her unwearied affection failed him.* Her letters had been a solace when everything around him was unpropitious; and the last of them, written from under the roof of the mother of the empress of France, who had always been her friend, with whom she had been living during much of the past few years, and who gave her a home after Stopford's death, was among the papers sent to me by Landor shortly before his own death. Of but a few months' earlier date were his lines to the empress.

Although I neither love nor hate
Those whom the vulgar call the great,
My heart is rais'd as bends my knee,
Bright lodestar of thy sex, to thee.
She whom my Stopford boasts for his
Thy girlish smile afar must miss.
On high Castilia's breezy plains
Loved by thy mother she remains,
And makes her at some hours forget
Her loss, and find a daughter yet.

Besides the very interesting scenes of Homer and Laertes, the best parts of the volume dedicated to Mr. Twisleton were six other classic dialogues in blank verse, entitled Hippomenes and Atalanta; Sappho, Alcæus, Anacreon, and Phaon; Theseus and Hippolyta; the

* He enjoyed also through life the friendliest regard of another of his wife's relatives, the youngest of her brothers, his godson and called Walter after him, who became a most distinguished engineer officer in India.

Trial of Æschylus; Aurelius and Lucan; and Damocles and Hiera. It contained also a brief scene, more masterly than any of these except the Laertes and Homer, in which the murder of the fine old Scottish king, the second James, in the Dominican convent of Perth, is represented not only with force and distinctness, but with a quiet power of silent pathos which is deeply tragical.

Anticipating my narrative by but a few months, I have now to add, of the last writings of this wonderful old man, five scenes or dialogues brought to me by Mr. Twisleton from Landor, written even a later date than any of the above, and printed below exactly as I received them, in accordance with his urgent desire.

## IV. Five unpublished Scenes, being the Last Imaginary Conversations.

### I. Pythagoras and a Priest of Isis.

*Pythagoras.* Thou hast inquired of me, and thou hast heard
All I could tell thee of our Deities;
With patience bear me yet awhile, nor deem me
Irreverent, if I ask to know of yours
Which are around me on these sacred walls.

*Priest.* Willingly granted; hesitate no more;
Speak.

*Pythagoras.* Yonder is an ape, and there a dog,
And there a cat.

*Priest.* Think not we worship these,
But, what is holier even than worshipping,
Gratitude, mindful thro' obscuring years,
Urgeth us to look up to them.
O guest!
Now tell me what indweller of a town
But shares his substance, nor unwillingly,
With his protectress from invader mouse;
What child but fondles her and is carest;
What aged dame but sees her likeness there
More strikingly than in her dearest child?
Now to another of these images.

None are such friends as dogs; they never leave
The side of those who only stroke the head
Or speak a kindly word to them.

*Pythagoras.* 'Tis true.
But may I ask of thee without offence,
What good do apes to any, young or old,
What service render they, what fondness show?
Thou smilest; I rejoice to see that smile.
I wish all teachers could bear questioning
So quietly. Religious men bear least.

*Priest.* Pythagoras, they rightly call thee wise,
Yet, like thy countrymen, thou knowest not
Thy origin and theirs, and all on earth.
Some of you think, nor quite absurdly so,
That, when the deluge drown'd all creatures else,
One only woman was there left alive,
And she took up two stones and cast behind
Her back those two, whence men and women sprang.
Scraps of the stones seem clinging to the heart
Of that primordial pair.
We priests of Isis
Acknowledge duly our progenitor,
Whose moral features still remain unchanged
In many, thro' all times.
Did ever ape,
As kindred nations have been doing since,
Tear limb from limb the brother, grin to see
His native bush and his blue babes enwrapt
In flames about the crib for winding-sheet?
There live in other lands, from ours remote,
The intolerant and ferocious who insist
That all shall worship what themselves indite;
We never urge this stiff conformity.
Forms ever present are our monitors,
Nor need they flesh and blood, nor spill they any.
We leave each man his choice, the pictured plank
Or hammer'd block, nor quarrel over ours.

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II. ENDYMION AND SELENE.

(*An old discontented love-affair.*)

*Selene.* Endymion! sleepest thou, with heels upright
And listless arms athwart a vacant breast?
Endymion! thou art drowsier than thy sheep,
And heedest me as now thou heedest them.
I come to visit thee, and leave a home

Where all is cheerful, and I find a face
If not averted, yet almost as bad.
Rise; none are here to steal away thy reeds.

*Endymion.* Thou art immortal; mortal is Endymion,
Nor sleeping but thro' weariness and pain.

*Selene.* What pains thee?

*Endymion.* Love, the bitterest of pains.

*Selene.* Hast thou not mine? ungrateful!

*Endymion.* Thine I have,
O how less warm than what a shepherdess
Gives to a shepherd!

*Selene.* Cease thy plaint, rash boy;
I give no warmer to the Blest above,
Yet even the brightest every day pursues
My path, and often listens to my praise,
And takes up his own harp and aids the song.
Few are the youths whose finger never trill'd
An early oat or later lyre for me.
Haply thou too, Endymion, shalt be sung
Afar from Latmos if thou meritest,
Nor thy name sever'd, as 'tis here, from mine.
Silence is sweeter at the present hour
Than voice or pipe, or sleep; so pay my due
Ere Morn come on, for Morn is apt to blush
When she sees kisses; let her not see ours.

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III. THE MARRIAGE OF HELENA AND MENELAOS.

Mounted upon a tall Thessalian steed
Between two purely white rode Menelaos,
The sons of Leda were his company.
On drove they swiftly to where stood, above
Eurotas, a large mansion, large but low;
There they dismounted, two of them well known,
The third was never seen that way before.
Under the shelter of the house's roof
Sate with an idle spindle in the hand
Two seeming equal-aged, and yet was one
A mother, one her daughter; both sprang up.
"O Polydeukes!" the fond mother cried
(He had embraced her first), "O Kastor! come
Both of you to my bosom; long, how long
Have ye been absent!
Helena! no word
Of welcome to your brethren?"
From the neck

Of Kastor, whereto she had clung, she turn'd
Her eyes a moment on the stranger's face,
Whispering in Kastor's ear, "Whom bring ye back?
Mild as he looks he makes me half-afraid."
But Kastor, without answering, ran where stood
His mother and their guest; to her he said,
"Here, my sweet mother, we have brought to thee
The son of Atreus, brother of that king
Who rules the widest and the richest realm
In all this land. Our guest is Menelaos."
Extending her right arm and open hand,
"Enter," said she, "a humble domicile,
Which Gods have enter'd and vouchsafed to bless."
Whereto with due obeisance he replied,
"O Leda, where thou art the Gods indeed
May well have enter'd, and have left behind
Their blessing, and to such I bend my brow;
Thy sons announced the welcome thou hast given."
"And not one word to *me!*" said Helena,
With a low sigh, which Kastor caught and broke,
Thus chiding her: "Come thou too, unabasht,
Bid my friend welcome; speak it."
"I must not
Until our mother tells me," said the maid.
"Then I *do* tell thee," Leda said; whereon
Helena rais'd her head, but timidly,
And bade him welcome: gazing on his face
More confidently now by slow degrees
She question'd him about the world abroad,
And whether there were rivers bright and cool
As her Eurotas, on whose stream were swans,
"Until rude children mockt their hoarser tones,
And pelted them with egg-shells if they hissed.
My gentle mother could but ill endure
To see them angry, stretching out their necks
Ruffled, as they are never till provok'd;
For she loved swans, the tamest one the most,
So tame that he would let her hold his beak
Between her lips and stroke his plumage down:
This fondler was her favourite long before
I saw the light, when she was of my age.
Ah! we have no such now, I wish we had.
There still are birds of red and azure wing,
Beautiful to behold; and here are heard
Among the willows some who sing all night,
Unsociable and shy, and shun the feast

Of other birds upon the sunny field.
Are any such elsewhere? these you shall hear
When sleep hath carried off the weariness
Which that proud prancing creature must have caused."
Night came, but slumber came not quite so soon
To four faint eyes: the lark was up in air
When Helena arose; the mother first
Had left her chamber, and the board was spread
With fruits and viands ready for the guest.
Presently he and his two friends sate down;
But Helena was paddling listlessly
In the fresh river, with unbraided hair
And vesture cast aside; some irksomeness
She felt which water could not all remove.
The cool and spacious hall she enter'd soon,
Where Menelaos and her brethren sate;
The guest was seated at her mother's right,
And she was bidden to the left, close by.
Often did she look forward, to drive off
The flies that buzz'd about the stranger's head . .
Flies never were so troublesome before.
Complacently saw Leda the device,
But Menelaos saw the care alone
Of a young maiden hospitably kind.
The brothers were impatient of delay
Until they both could urge their parent on
To give their sister to a man so brave:
Such too was Leda's wish when she had learnt
How throughout Argos honour'd and beloved
Was Menelaos: she warn'd Helena
More earnestly than ever, more profuse
Of sage advice and proverbs from the depth
Of ancient lore, how youth runs fast away,
And beauty faster; sixteen years had flown
Unwaringly, and had she never thought
To wed?
"O mother! I am but a child,"
Cried she; "do any marry at sixteen?"
The mother shook her head and thus pursued:
"Remember how few moons have risen since
A wild Cecropian carried thee from home,
And well bethink thee that another time
Thy brothers may be absent, in the chase
Or far in foreign lands, as now of late."
Helena made excuses, and the more
She made the more she wished them overcome;

But if her mother and her father Zeus
So will'd it, 'tis her duty she must yield.
She ran across the court wherein three steeds
Were standing loose; there Polydeukes trimm'd
His courser's mane, there Kastor drew his palm
Down the pink nostril of his dapple-gray,
And just beyond them the Thessalian steed
Stampt at neglect, for Menelaos lay
Sleepless past sunrise, which was not his wont.
Incontinent the brothers rais'd their heads
And shouted,
"Here, thou sluggard! here before
Our busy sister come to pat the necks
Or throw arm round them."
Scarcely were these words
Spoken ere Menelaos was at hand.
Helena, who had watcht him thus advance,
Drew back as one surprised, and seem'd intent
To turn away, but Polydeukes sprang
And caught her arm and drew her, struggling ill,
To where his brother with their comrade stood.
At first she would have turn'd her face aside,
But could not: Menelaos gently toucht
Her shrinking arm; little it shrank, nor long.
Then he entreated her to hear the words
Of true and ardent love, for such was his
He swore; she shook her head, with brow abased.
"What ardent love can mean I never heard;
My brothers, if they knew it, never told me,"
Said she, and lookt amazed into his face.
"Simplicity and innocence!" exclaim'd
The wondering Argive. "What a prudent wife
Will *she* be, when I win her, as I hope,
Diffident as she is nor prone to trust;
Yet hope I, daughter though she be of Zeus,
And I but younger brother of a king."
Day after day he grew in confidence,
And gave her all he gain'd in it, and more.
Hymen was soon invok'd, nor was averse;
Eros had long been ready, the light-wing'd,
And laught at his slow step who marcht behind.
Chaunted were hymns to either Deity
By boys and maidens, tho' they understood
No word they sang: serious was Hymen's face
When Eros laught up into it and twitcht
The saffron robe, and heeded no reproof.

'Tis said they sometimes since have disagreed
More seriously: but let not me report
The dissidence and discord of the Gods.

---

IV. AN OLD MAN AND A CHILD.

A child pickt up a pebble, of the least
Among a myriad on a flat sea-shore;
And tost it back again.
"What hast thou done?"
Said mildly an old man.
"Nothing at all,"
Replied the child; "it only was a pebble,
And not worth carrying home, or looking at,
Or wetting, tho' I did it, with my tongue:
Tho' it was smooth, it was not large enough
To copy on when I begin to write,
Nor proper in the winter to strike fire from,
Or puss to pat and roll along the floor."
Then said the elder:
"Thoughtful child art thou,
And mightest have learnt from it some years hence
What prouder wise ones never have attain'd.
The wisest know not yet how many suns
Have bleacht that stone, how many waves have roll'd
Above it when upon its mountain's breast;
How once it was no stone nor hard, but lapt
Amid the tender herbage of the field."
The child stared up, frighten'd; then ran away.
Before she had run far she turn'd her face
To look at that strange man.
"He seem'd so calm,
He may not be quite mad nor mischievous.
I shall not mind him much another time;
But, O, what random stories old men tell!"

---

V. ANDREW MARVEL AND HENRY MARTEN.

*Marvel.* Glad to see thee once more, my good Harry! how art thou?

*Marten.* You see *how* I am by seeing *where* I am. Prisons are but indifferent conservatories of health. Cold air penetrates the closest of them, and friendship is the only matter it shuts out. But here you are, Andrew, to disprove my saying. God knows how grateful I feel for this visit.

*Marvel.* The breezes from the Welsh mountains, and from the estuary under the castle, have kept the colour fresh on thy cheek.

*Marten.* When I mount upon the table I can catch them as they pass, yet I would willingly barter the best of them against the smoke of London and the fogs of the Thames. Oliver's pen across my muzzle would not mightily discompose me on a like occasion.

*Marvel.* Never sigh, my man!

*Marten.* Pleasure hath her sighs, though shorter than those of sorrow, and you bring them out with you.

*Marvel.* Even here there may be occasionally a glimpse of happiness. When we enjoy it we wish for more, never quite contented. If we kiss a fair maiden on one cheek, we press for the other. We change our mantles when they have lost their gloss. Even in the solitude of this royal enclosure thou enjoyest a privilege granted to few outside.

*Marten.* What may it be?

*Marvel.* Memory, justly proud. Hast thou not sat convivially with Oliver Cromwell? Hast thou not conversed familiarly with the only man greater than he, John Milton? One was ambitious of perishable power, the other of imperishable glory; both have attained their aim. Believe me, it is somewhat to have lived in fellowship with the truly great, and to have eschewed the falsely.

*Marten.* A prodigiously great one, in a black apron and white lawn sleeves, puffy and fresh and fragrant from his milliner, came some time ago to instruct me in my duty and to convert me into righteousness. He was announced by the governor as *my Lord*. I recollected one only whom I ever called so. I bowed however, and sat down, after he had done the like.

*Marvel.* These gentry usually set their day-labourers at the work of edification. My Lord himself, I hope, got nothing out of you worth carrying to court.

*Marten.* He looked on the table and saw there a book I had received the day before, and was reading; it was *Hudibras*. That is all he saw, and all he got out of me.

*Marvel.* I perceive, by thy smile, that humour is not yet parched-up in thee, my pleasant Hal!

*Marten.* There are strokes of the wand that can open fresh springs in the barren rock. I can enjoy fun in a poet, although I am none myself, and the better perhaps for that reason. Are there any of our other poets yet living?

*Marvel.* Plenty, plenty; but they ride without girths to their nags, and often roll off the saddle. Waller, the smoothest and most graceful of them, is growing old at Beaconsfield. Even the courtiers jeer at his versatility. Dryden is living. He bears no hatred to Milton, though he would have rhymed *Paradise Lost*. Butler was less mischievous. Cowley has written one unaffected piece, an Anacreontic on his imaginary mistresses. Good fellow! he died suddenly; drunk

after dinner with bishop Sprat of Rochester, he was found dead in a wet ditch.

*Marten.* Poor Abraham! He was my chokepear. They called him metaphysical: does metaphysical mean fantastical? What people feel, they surely can speak out, and not run into dark corners to be looked for.

*Marvel.* Ostriches hide their heads under their wings in the sands of the desert, and are followed for their plumage. But you are right, Harry. A poet loses nothing by being clear and bright, provided his readers are not dull or cloudy. There is a prodigious quantity of thought in Butler, and its brightness makes the inconsiderate doubt its depth.

*Marten.* Butler, I hear, is a great favourite with the king, who has paid four groats for the poem, but never one to the poet; poor as Job, they tell me, or as Milton. Yet Milton, at least, is free.

*Marvel.* He is free from all sores but an inconstant and incurable wife. Solitary in his city garden, if there be any flower he stoops for it in vain; he has no eyes to find it. I visit him now and then; but they who most want comfort most avoid society.

## V. The Close.

Implored so long in vain, at last is come
The hour that leads me to a peaceful home.

These lines, with others that spoke of the burden of life, and its heaviness at last even when we have only years to carry, were in a letter from Landor brought to me by Mr. Twisleton at the close of 1863. During the decline of that year he is described by those living in Italy to have become but the wreck of himself; and yet the pieces which have just been given were its product. Exceptional indeed, and very wonderful, such a lot,—to be carrying the weight of ninety years with so little loss of intellectual power, after so much self-achieved greatness and self-inflicted misery. A friend in writing to him at this date very aptly compared him to one of the "Jötuns" of his early poem of *Gunlaug*,* in a note to which it is said that in the North at all times had

* See ante, i. 184-187.

existed men of enormous stature; that we ourselves had seen them, our fathers had seen them, and our children (perhaps) might see them; but that ordinary people were apt to fear these higher sort of men, would lie in ambush for them, and would persecute them; until at last mothers came again to produce children only or nearly of the common size; and yet, for all that, one of the old stock would occasionally reappear. "To change "your words," the letter went on, "to add to, or omit "them, is of course to wrong you and oneself; but I "remember, as I now think of what you have been and "are, thus much of a passage *you* may long ago have "forgotten. There will be plenty however to learn it, "and many an utterance of yours, in days when we shall "both of us be otherwhere lodged and otherwise em-"ployed. I hope you take the due comfort out of your "wonderful amount of achievement, and keep up the old "heroic heart *usque ad finem, post finem!* And so, all "happiness to you from God, and all honour from men."

Without comment, and requesting only that the reader will considerately forgive some expressions retained in them favourable to myself which I could not wholly erase, I now print, exactly as they came, Landor's last letters. They carry my narrative very nearly to its close, relating what it would be difficult otherwise to express, yet hardly desirable to omit altogether; and here, at the end of life, as invariably at its beginning, they were signed simply "Walter" Landor.

14TH DECEMBER 1863.

"Well do I know the friendship you had for me, and have grieved over its interruption. I would not now write but for the promise you once held out to me that you might consent to be my biographer. Last week I received a most insolent letter from a Mr. ——, containing a note from a person connected with him informing me that he was writing my life.

He gave me a specimen, full of abuse and falsehood. This I communicated to my excellent friend Mr. Twisleton. If you still retain a thought of becoming my biographer, I hope you will protect me from this injustice. How often have I known you vindicate from unmerited aspersions honest literary men! Unhappily no friend has been found hitherto who takes any such interest in WALTER LANDOR."

---

4TH JANUARY 1864 (with order for copies of the *Heroic Idyls*).

"MY DEAR FORSTER, I write instantly on receiving your generous and manly letter. Severe sciatica has deprived me both of locomotion and of sleep, but not of gratitude. I have been able to write what I am now writing with great difficulty. Were it possible, I would answer at the same time Browning's ever-kind letter. Will you send this to him, which says all I could say. Excessive pain at every movement withholds me from it. May both of you enjoy as many happy new-years as I have endured of unhappy ones, and may you ever believe that no man is more affectionately yours than

"WALTER LANDOR."

---

2D FEBRUARY 1864.

"MY DEAR FORSTER, Your kind letter has almost made me well again. It will be with renewed pleasure that I receive your book. Browning will give you the address of his correspondent in Florence, through whom I may receive it. Many are the kind letters on my *last* birthday, for *last* it must be—but yours the kindest. So, good-bye, with every blessing from your grateful WALTER LANDOR."

---

18TH FEBRUARY 1864.

"MY DEAR FORSTER, It is to you I write the last letter that perhaps I may ever write to anyone. Several days I have been confined to my bed by a sciatica, and could neither write nor read. I hope I may live long enough to read your *Life of Eliot*. Our friend Browning has my address. He lives where you know in London. My head and eyes are confused so that I cannot find his letter, which I laid by. He has a banker here whose name I sent for Mrs. ——" [he means Mrs. Wilson] "to tell me, which she did one moment agone, and I have now forgotten. But not, nor ever shall, your unwearied kindness to

"W. LANDOR."

---

22D FEBRUARY 1864.

"DEAR FORSTER, Tear off the opposite page, and send it to Dickens. I am anxious to read the book you so kindly promise me. Your bookseller will have a correspondent here by whom it can come. Ever affectionately yours, W. LANDOR."

---

21ST MARCH 1864.

"MY DEAR FORSTER, Your book reached me yesterday and kept me awake. To-day comes your kind letter. While I have any of my senses about my head I will attempt to write of both. * * * * * There has long been a sickly season in all countries for the growth of men to greatness. How few have been bred in England that could compare with Eliot and Pym! Alas, I cannot write more. Adieu then, and believe me ever your affectionate W. LANDOR."

---

4TH MAY 1864.

"DEAR FORSTER, My kind friend Mr. Twisleton will convey to you some papers and a small bundle of letters, the last I receive. They show that I have yet friends, and am grateful ever as your old friend, W. LANDOR."

---

9TH MAY 1864.

"MY DEAR FORSTER, This is the last letter I shall ever write to anybody. My kind friend Mr. Twisleton will carry it, with my others last received, to England with him. My love to noble Dickens, with, to yourself, your ever affectionate

"W. LANDOR'S.

"I have been utterly deaf and almost dumb these last five weeks. I am grateful for your promise that you will give to the world the last things the old man has done."

---

9TH SEPTEMBER 1864.

"MY DEAR FORSTER, Nothing could give me greater pleasure than the letter I receive from you to-day. I lost my senses for five days and nights in consequence of a verdict obliging me to pay so vast a sum for exposing . . . I must leave off. My head is splitting. You will print what I sent you.

"Ever affectionately yours, W. LANDOR."

Shortly before the letters were written immediately preceding this last, which brings the end very near to us, an incident is said to have occurred, which, upon the relation of a friend in Florence, the American lady describes in her recollections. On the night before the 1st of May, Landor became very restless, as during the year had happened frequently, and at about 2 o'clock in the morning he rang for Mrs. Wilson, and insisted on having his room lighted and its windows thrown open. He then asked for pen, ink, and paper, and the date of the day. Being told that it was the dawn of the 1st of May, he wrote a few lines of verse, and, leaning back, said, "I shall never write again. Put "out the lights and draw the curtains." The paper on which he had written was not afterwards found, and his housekeeper supposed it was destroyed by him. She described him, during what remained of life, as gradually more and more indifferent to outward things; for the most part reading, or at all events with a book in his hand; physically not deafer, but so much more heedless of external impressions that she had to write down every question she asked him; and with hardly any one crossing his threshold except his two younger sons.

"I did not give up visiting him," Mr. Kirkup says in a letter to me: "but, as he had complained of the "fatigue of talking to me, who am deaf, I went just "enough to show that I did not take offence, and I made "my visits short ones. Another cause of my keeping "away was that he had reconciled himself to two of "his sons, who were always there, and he felt uneasy "at my seeing them after all that had formerly passed "with me and Mr. Browning. The last time I saw "him was in a chair drawn by Carlino, who stopped "to speak to me; but his father hardly noticed me.

" Since that I have kept away, but was glad to hear " that the young men continued to live with him and " to sleep at his house. Carlino had told me that he " went every evening to put him to bed, and afterwards " that they both slept there because their father was " afraid of their returning at night to the villa on ac- " count of brigands." Landor himself confirmed this account in one of his last letters to another friend. " Kirkup comes often to visit me. I can hardly wish " it. We are both as deaf as posts, and it brings me " the bronchitis to speak audibly."

One more incident remains to be mentioned, which in writing to me some time later Mr. Kirkup referred to. " Young Algernon Swinburne, whose mother I knew " thirty years ago, came out from England for no other " purpose than to see Landor, without knowing him, a " few weeks before his death. He afterwards dedicated " to him, in Greek, his beautiful tragedy of *Atalanta in* " *Calydon*. Landor was much gratified by his enthusi- " asm, and brought him to me." The visit happily was made not quite so late, or it could hardly have yielded the gratification it gave. The young poet's announcement of his arrival in Florence was among the letters sent me by Landor in May. He had indeed, he wrote to him, travelled as far as Italy with the sole object and desire of seeing him. He carried to him a letter from an old friend;* from many others of his countrymen, who might never hope to see him, he was the bearer of infinite homage and thankfulness; and for himself he had the eager wish to lay at his feet, what he could never hope to put into adequate words, profound gratitude and life-long reverence. It was but natural that all this should give pleasure to the old man, in the sense of fame

* See ante, p. 261.

it brought so closely home to him; and with it may also have come some foretaste of a higher pleasure and happier fame awaiting him in the future.

In the present there was little more left to him. His last note to me was dated on the 8th of September, and on the 17th he had ceased to live. He had so weakened himself by abstaining from food during three preceding days, that a fit of coughing killed him. There was no other suffering. It was a *buona morte*, said the Italian who was present; as brief, as it was unexpected and sudden. He was laid in the English burying-ground, and a stone placed over the grave. On this had been cut correctly his name, and the dates of his birth and death; but the Florentine stonecutter's English was imperfect, and the word "wife," which should have appeared in the "last sad tribute" of the rest of the inscription, had taken the quite unintelligible form of "coife." But as there was no conscious irony in this, so neither was there much inappropriateness; and Landor was not to pass away without a worthier written epitaph. It came from the young poet who visited him so lately, and needs only to be prefaced by the remark that the convention by which Florence became the capital of Italy had been signed two days before Landor died.

---

IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

Back to the flower-town, side by side,
The bright months bring
Newborn the bridegroom and the bride,
Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,
Filled full of sun;
All things come back to her, being free;
All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot
Flowers that were dead
Live, and old suns revive; but not
That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea,
Far north, I hear
One face shall never turn to me
As once this year:

Shall never smile and turn and rest
On mine as there,
Nor one most sacred hand be prest
Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half linger,
Half run before;
The youngest to the oldest singer
That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find
Till all grief end,
In holiest age our mightiest mind,
Father and friend.

But thou, if anything endure,
If hope there be,
O spirit that man's life left pure,
Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were
Look earthward now;
Let dreams revive the reverend hair,
The imperial brow;

Come back in sleep, for in the life
Where thou art not
We find none like thee. Time and strife
And the world's lot

Move thee no more; but love at least
And reverent heart
May move thee, royal and released
Soul, as thou art.

And thou, his Florence, to thy trust
Receive and keep,
Keep safe his dedicated dust,
His sacred sleep.

So shall thy lovers, come from far,
Mix with thy name
As morning-star with evening-star
His faultless fame.

---

The only perfect poet is he who makes no man perfect. Landor's fame very surely awaits him, but it will not in any sense be faultless. To the end we see him as it were unconquerable. He keeps an unquailing aspect to the very close, has yielded nothing in the duel he has been fighting so long single-handed with the world, and dies at last with harness on his back. But he is only unvanquished; he is not the victor. Victorious he cannot at any time be said to have shown himself; either over the circumstances from which he suffered, or the genius by which he achieved, so much. Greatness there was always; a something of the heroic element which lifted him, in nearly all that he said and very much that he did, considerably above ordinary stature; but never to be admitted or described without important drawbacks. What was wanting most, in his books and his life alike, was the submission to some kind of law. To this effect a remark was made at the opening of this biography, which has had con-

firmation in almost every page of it written since. But, though he would not accept those rules of obedience without which no man can wisely govern either himself or others; and though he lived far beyond the allotted term of life without discovering what was true in the profound old saying, that all the world is wiser than any man in the world; his genius, which the possession of such additional knowledge would have rendered more complete, was yet in itself so commanding and consummate as to bring into play the nobler part of his character only; and by this his influence will remain over others, while for all that was less noble he will himself have paid the penalty. I am not going now to preach any homily over my old friend. Whatever there was to say has been said already with as much completeness as I found to be open to me. Attempt has been honestly made in this book to estimate with fairness and candour Landor's several writings, as each of them successively appeared; and judgment has been passed, with an equal desire to be only just, on all the qualities of his temperament which affected necessarily not his own life only. But, now that the story is told, no one will have difficulty in striking the balance between its good and ill; and what was really imperishable in Landor's genius will not be treasured less, or less understood, for the more perfect knowledge of his character.

What indeed was highest in him receives vivid illustration from that which limited and controlled it. If he had measured everything less by his own unaided impressions, if he had consented at times to judge himself by others instead of always judging others by himself, the originality that distinguishes all his books might have been less intensely marked. It is a great power, as solitude itself is, if a man chooses to risk the danger

attending it. To refuse also to recognise any strength but in oneself, to exalt continually one's individual prowess, and to rest all claim to magnanimity and honour on self-assertion rather than self-denial, cannot but be a grave fault in the conduct of life in modern time; but shift it back into classic ages, and the heroes of Greece and Rome take visible shape once more. Yet was this only a part of Landor's happiest achievement, which was not so circumscribed within Paganism as the general character of his genius and method has led many to suppose. The source from which he drew his inspiration had not so confined him in applying it. Though his mind was cast in the antique mould, it had opened itself to every kind of impression through a long and varied life; he has written with equal excellence in both poetry and prose, which can hardly be said of any of his contemporaries; and perhaps the single epithet by which his books would be best described is that reserved exclusively for books not characterised only by genius, but also by special individuality. They are unique. Having possessed them, we should miss them. Their place would be supplied by no others. They have that about them, moreover, which renders it almost certain that they will frequently be resorted to in future time. There are none in the language more quotable. Even where impulsiveness and want of patience have left them most fragmentary, this rich compensation is offered to the reader. There is hardly a conceivable subject, in life or literature, which they do not illustrate by striking aphorisms, by concise and profound observations, by wisdom ever applicable to the needs of men, and by wit as available for their enjoyment. Nor, above all, will there anywhere be found a more pervading passion for liberty, a fiercer hatred of the base, a wider sympathy

with the wronged and the oppressed, or help more ready at all times for those who fight at odds and disadvantage against the powerful and the fortunate, than in the writings of WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

THE END.

*For General Index to the Biography, see the end of the First Volume.*

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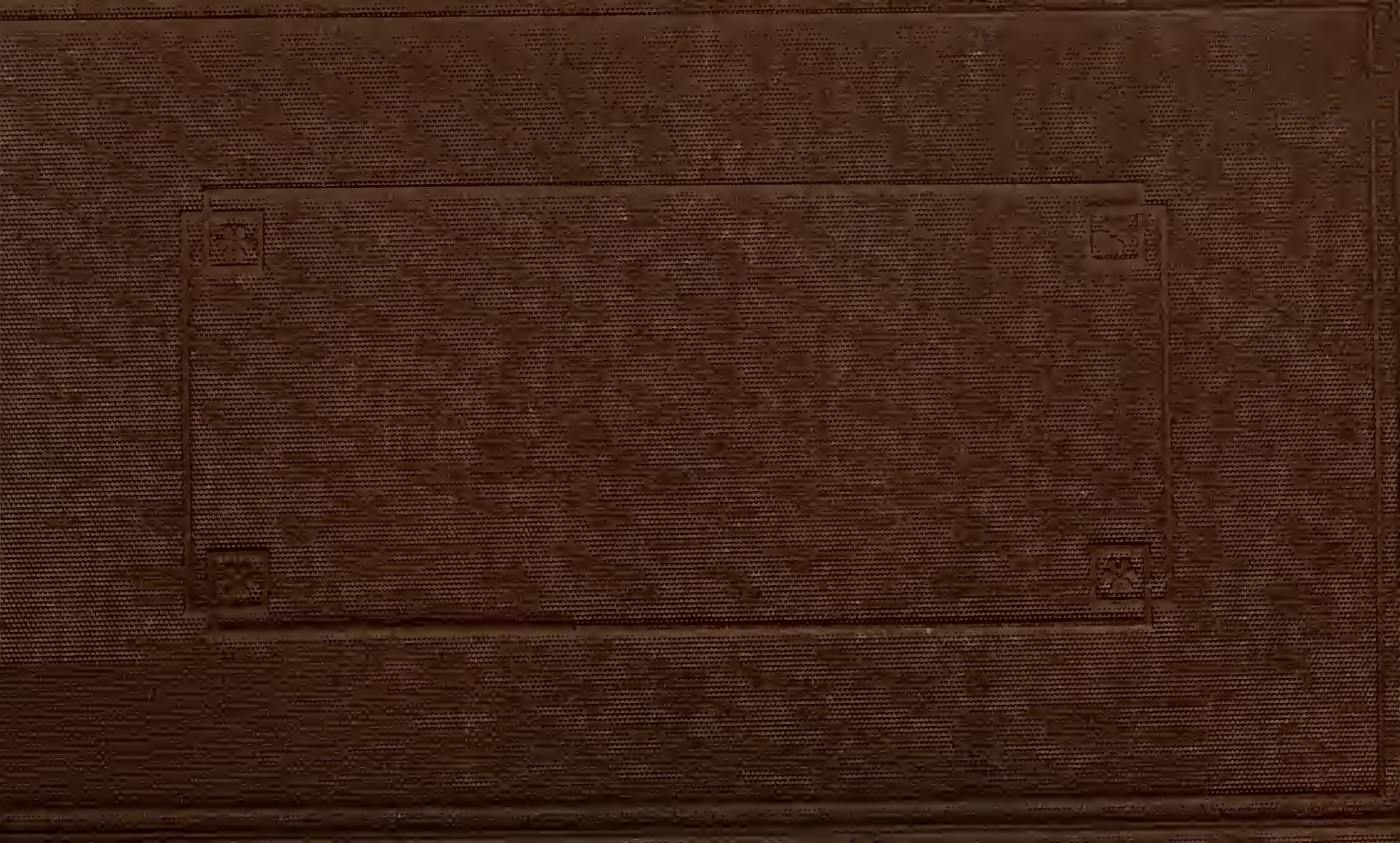
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